

IOWA BIRD LIFE

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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Meet an Iowa Birder: Jim Sinclair

Rick Trieff

I first met Jim Sinclair in 1971 at Simpson College. Having recently transferred from a school in Ohio, I was working on a math assignment in my dorm room when this guy with hair half way down his back walked in and introduced himself. After he left I figured this was someone who would probably be a bad influence on me. Little did I know that he would



Jim Sinclair at his home in Indianola, Warren, April 2010. Photograph by Carol Sinclair

be a profoundly positive one. During those college days Jim would occasionally disappear from campus. When someone would ask regarding his whereabouts, the typical response was “he is wandering around a swamp somewhere.” Even back then when most of his friends were focused on other sorts of entertainment, Jim was enthralled by nature.

Born on Staten Island of Canadian parents, Jim enjoys dual citizenship. He spent much of his early years in various parts of Canada. Those of us who are so fortunate know of Jim’s loving and doting mom and most impressive father. Any friend of Jim’s has been treated with great warmth and hospitality in the Sinclair household—just ask Beth Brown, Ann Johnson, and David Youngblut who feasted on lobster when they dropped by the Sinclair home in Nova Scotia during a birding adventure. Anyone who has birded with Jim is familiar with his impressive physical stamina. He inherited it from his father, a former RCAF fighter pilot and NHL hockey player. While well into his 60s, Jim’s dad rollerbladed through the neighborhood with hockey stick in hand to ward off the neighborhood dogs. Very recently Jim and I did some birding in southern Arizona, less than a week after he had hernia surgery. There he was clambering up a canyon and fording a rushing stream with aplomb while in pursuit of a Rufous-capped Warbler. He found his bird! Then he sneezed and almost turned into putty. A rocky canyon posed no problem for him but a sneeze almost laid Jim and his hernia low.



Jim Sinclair with dinner, Boundary Waters region of Minnesota, August 2009. Photograph by Jesse Sinclair

Birding with Jim is invigorating, educational, entertaining, occasionally aggravating, and sometimes hilarious. There is a story of Jim's birding outing to Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Nebraska with Beth Brown and David Youngblut. Jim was driving Beth's brand new Dodge van through the refuge when it got hung up on a grassy knoll. While Jim spun the wheels trying to get the vehicle unstuck, the dry grass underneath the van caught on fire. So they put the fire out but by that time it was getting dark. Then Jim talked David into walking ten miles to a ranger station to get somebody to come back and help them free the van.

Steve Dinsmore can relate a story about a winter outing in Warren County when he and Jim were looking for owls. Jim suggested they work a piece of private property that Jim assured Steve he had permission to traverse. What he

did not tell Steve was that the permission had been granted ten years earlier. Unbeknownst to Jim, ownership of the property had subsequently changed hands. Of course the owner of the property showed up with a shotgun aimed at them, informing the trespassing desperadoes that the sheriff was on his way. Jim explained that they were birders and not hunters and that he had prior permission, so the sheriff did not haul the troublemakers off to the calaboose.

Aaron Brees and Jim had a memorable trek to California where they observed all manner of bird and mammal life, including a large, unhappy Bobcat. On a trail at Point Reyes they observed several Black-tailed Deer. On their return hike all the deer were gone except for one that was obviously dead. Jim hopped over a ditch to check it out. As Jim investigated, Aaron saw the Bobcat under a bush at Jim's back not ten feet from him. The snarling Bobcat expressed its opinion of the interruption. Jim thoughtfully backed away from its kill and the Bobcat graciously let him go.

Jim is 58 years old and is a professional chef. He has worked for a food service corporation at Meredith Publishing, Pioneer, and Wells Fargo. Jim worked for several years for notable Iowa cook Michael La Valle with whom Jim developed his chef's skills. His birding life has been facilitated by his beautiful wife Carol, who was his college sweetheart. They have two strapping sons, now in their 20s, who look at their dad with obvious affection and much curiosity.

Jim is a longstanding, active member of the IOU. He has served on the IOU Board of Directors, the Membership Committee, and the Records Committee. He has contributed to the seasonal Field Reports for more than 30 years, participated in the first Breeding Bird Atlas project and contributes to the current effort, and has written articles for *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News*.

His life list is at 613 species, state list at 372, Warren County list at 273 (he picked up a Bewick's Wren at Wesley Woods the first week of April this year), and his yard list numbers 134 species. He has a particular affinity for Winter Wrens and cannot pass up an opportunity to search creeks and streams for them, and is similarly dogged in his search for Northern Saw-whet Owls. Last year he counted 26 mammals in Iowa; in Warren County that includes a Bobcat, a Long-tailed Weasel, and a River Otter. He also has a list of three hanged birds: a cormorant, European Starling, and Warbling Vireo. These unfortunates had adverse interactions with fishing line and string.

I remember when Jim introduced me to Gladys Black many years ago when we stopped by her Pleasantville home. I was sitting on a couch chatting away with Jim and Gladys while sitting next to Nikki. That is Nikki the Snowy Owl that Gladys rehabilitated. It was just perched there next to me, seemingly enjoying the conversation. Wow! Birding with Jim is an adventure.

1004 N. C St Indianola, IA 50125 (rttrieff@dmacc.edu)

Field Reports—Winter 2009–2010

Aaron E. Brees

WEATHER

The weather this winter was not only a dominant factor affecting bird abundance and distribution, but also limited when and where people could venture out to bird, assuming they were brave enough to try.



Aaron E. Brees

This winter got off to a start reminiscent of last year, with some wild swings in temperature. On 1 December it was 62 degrees as far north as Ankeny, while nine days later, on the 10th, most of the state was in negative territory with a low of -19 at Little Sioux. On Christmas day it was back up to 49 degrees in Burlington, but by the 29th, Spencer had returned to -18 degrees. Two major storm systems in December produced rain and freezing rain, but most of the precipitation fell as snow. Double digit snows were common across the state and Spencer set a new state record for December snow with 40 inches.

January was another month of fluctuating temperatures. On the 2nd, Spencer dropped to -37 degrees and the wind chill in Estherville was -53 degrees. From mid- to late January, temperatures were well above normal across much of the state, reaching 45 degrees in many locales. Of course this was too good to last, and by the 29th both Sheldon and Spencer bottomed out at -17 degrees. Precipitation in January was about normal, but that normal amount was largely concentrated in two strong storms. Due to high winds, even moderate amounts of snowfall turned into blizzard conditions. Freezing rain coated many areas, resulting in damage to trees and power lines and making travel difficult to impossible.

February continued with the cold temperatures. The low for the month was -24 degrees at Guthrie Center and the high was 40 degrees at several locations. Forty degrees is the lowest high temperature ever for an Iowa February, and ties the lowest high temperature for any month on record. Not only was it cold, but again it was snowy. Parts of the state saw double digit single day snowfalls and monthly totals of 20 inches. High winds combined with the snow to produce blizzard conditions.

Overall, it was the 9th wettest and 19th coldest winter in 137 years of record keeping. The state averaged a massive 45 inches of snow, almost double the normal amount, and set a new all-time winter season snow record. This makes three consecutive colder than average, and four consecutive snowier than average, winters.

GENERAL TRENDS

The brutal cold and heavy snows at the beginning of the season pushed most of the late migrating and lingering waterfowl out of the state by mid-December. The usual spots with remaining open water held relatively small numbers of the hardier species. The last open holes at Saylorville and Red Rock did not hold any waterfowl, a highly unusual occurrence. The only sizeable waterfowl counts were early in the season in the southern extremes.

Looking on the bright side of the endless snow, Gray Partridge were relatively easy to locate all across northcentral Iowa. The snow cover also seemed to emphasize what

has become obvious to both hunters and birders: in some parts of the state, Ring-necked Pheasant is a really hard bird to find. Turkeys and Northern Bobwhite were reported in low numbers as well. The combination of heavy snow cover and freezing rain doesn't lend much hope that these populations will rebound in the near future.

American White Pelicans successfully wintered below the Red Rock dam again, but other semi-hardy waterbirds were virtually absent by mid-December. Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Shrike were present in decent numbers, while only a few Snowy Owls were found. It was a terrible winter for Long-eared Owls. Searches of many consistent roost sites came up empty. The heavy snow cover may have made hunting small rodents difficult, and pushed the owls further south.

Sapsuckers were reported in above average numbers despite the weather, although nothing like the totals from the record winter of the previous year. Disappointingly, there was no encore performance of last winter's finch invasion. In fact it was one of the poorest finch years in some time. Maybe finches are smarter than we think—while we were suffering through a long, cold winter, most of Canada was bathed in near record warmth with winter average temperatures ranging from 3 to 12 degrees above normal.

UNUSUAL SPECIES

No casual or accidental species were documented, although a few birds that are rarely reported in winter were found. Very unusual was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird that made the mistake of attempting to overwinter in Boone. Not unprecedented, but still unexpected, were a Great Egret and an American Pipit.

Probably the most shocking bird of the winter was a Swainson's Thrush photographed visiting a Johnson County feeder. This is the first Iowa winter record and one of very few well documented winter records for the U.S. and Canada. There are literally hundreds of winter Swainson's Thrush *reports*, yet virtually all of these are misidentified Hermit Thrushes. There are very few photograph or specimen records of this species in winter north of Mexico.

COMMENT

I think most would agree that this was not a particularly exciting winter for birds, so thank you to everyone who ventured out and provided material for this report.

My only comments are to repeat two requests that I made in last winter's report. First, please provide details for both rare Regular species and for common species on unusual dates. By details, I mean a brief physical description of the bird that would allow for separation from any similar species. For many species, this can be one short sentence. Here is an example from one of this winter's Savannah Sparrow reports: "We had a good look at the dark streaking on the breast and the yellow lores." That's not much, yet it hits enough of the relevant features to give some confidence that the bird was seen well and properly identified.

One report of a Casual species was excluded for lack of documentation and a significant record-late report was excluded for lack of any details.

Second, if you have internet access and have not tried to submit your reports through the website, please do. Remember, if you don't enter your report into the website, the

field reports editors have to do it for you, and the time it takes one person to enter several people's reports becomes substantial very quickly.

SPECIES DATA

ALL CAPS = Casual or Accidental. * = documented, ph = photo. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **ad** = adult, **CBC** = Christmas bird count, **imm** = immature, **juv** = juvenile, **L** = lake, **L&D** = lock and dam, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NWR** = national wildlife refuge, **P** = park, **RA** = recreation area, **Res** = reservoir, **R** = river, **SP** = state park, **WA** = wildlife area.

Greater White-fronted Goose: 1 on 14 Dec (BSc) and 10 Jan (BT) at Cedar L *Linn* was the only report that suggested overwintering. The first migrants were 2 on 18 Jan (JWR) and then 110 on 24 Jan (JG) in *Lee*.

Snow Goose: All: 47,700 migrating past the Hitchcock hawk watch *Pottawattamie* on 4 Dec (Mark Orsag fide PH), 1–2 on 6–8 Dec at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD, WO), and 6 on Jan 10 in *Decatur* (NMi).

Ross's Goose: All: singles on 1 Dec in *Black Hawk* (DE), 6 Dec in *Polk* (JB), and 7 Dec in *Story* (SJD).

Cackling Goose: Small numbers were reported sporadically throughout the period, making it difficult to determine which birds were migrants and which were overwintering. High: 764 on 7 Dec at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD).

Canada Goose: Flocks of 2,000–3,900 lingered into mid-December at a number of locations. The largest mid-winter concentrations were 735 at Ottumwa *Wapello* (SJD) and 3,081 at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD) both on 17 Jan.

Mute Swan: 2 at Ft. Madison, *Lee*, from 19 Dec–25 Jan (JLF, SJD, JG) were free flying.

Trumpeter Swan: Reported from over a dozen counties. Numbers at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* through the winter: 118 on 12 Dec, 72 on 24 Dec, 147 on 10 Jan, 132 on 30 Jan, and 88 on 13 Feb (SJD). High counts away from Beemer's Pond were 9 at Maffitt Res *Dallas* on 19 Dec (JG), 9 at LeClaire *Scott* on 3 Feb (JLF), and 11 on 18 Feb near Johnston *Polk* (DK).

Tundra Swan: All: 1 ad on 10–11 Dec at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD, HZ, WO), 1 ad on 28 Jan on the Mississippi R *Scott* (JWR), and 1 on 3 Feb at L&D 14 in *Scott* (JLF).

Wood Duck: 1 wintered at L&D 19 *Lee* (SJD) and 1–2 were reported through the season on the Mississippi R *Scott* (WMZ, JG). Other late birds were 1 on 20 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 1 on 13 Jan in *Hamilton* (Jim Moreland fide SJD), and 1 on 20 Jan at Cedar Lake *Linn* (BT).

Gadwall: High: 33 were still in *Polk* on 2 Dec (SJD). Likely winterers were 1–2 in *Lee* from 16 Dec–15 Feb (JLF, SJD) and 1 on 30 Jan in *Hamilton* (SJD); 6 on 16 Feb at Milford Creek *Dickinson* (LAS) may have been spring migrants.

American Wigeon: Last: 3 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD).

American Black Duck: More than 30 birds were reported, most from east and central Iowa. High: 5 on 2–6 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD) and 5 on 17 Jan on Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). Wintering birds included 1 at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* (SJD, DTh), 1–2 at Cedar L *Linn* (CRE, DP, DE, BT), and up to 5 on Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). The 2 on 18 Dec at Snyder's Bend *Woodbury* were noted to be the first seen there in several years (BFH).

Mallard: Easily the most reported was 40,000 at Riverton WA *Fremont* on 3 Dec



Surf Scoter and Long-tailed Duck, Cedar L., Linn, 5 December 2009. Photograph by Tyler Harms, Ames, IA

(KDy). The next largest groups were 1,720 on 5 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* and 850 on 17 Jan at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). Birds seemingly wintering in the northern half of the state included 194 at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* (SJD) and 48 on 3 Jan at Denison *Crawford* (SJD). The 300 on 17 Feb at Cedar Lake *Linn* (DT) and 55 on 19 Feb at Clear Lake *Cerro Gordo* (DT) may have included returning spring migrants.

Northern Shoveler: All: Up to 84 on 5 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD, JB) and 1 male on 24 Jan at Credit Island *Scott* (JG).

Northern Pintail: Successful overwinterers included 1 at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* (SJD) and 1–2 at Cedar L *Linn* (BT). Other mid-winter reports included birds in *Webster*, *Crawford*, and *Lee* (SJD).

Green-winged Teal: High: 116 on 2 Dec at Polk City WA *Polk* (SJD). Wintering singles were at Ottumwa *Wapello* on 17 Jan, *Hamilton* on 30 Jan, and Ft. Madison *Lee* on 7 Feb (SJD).

Canvasback: Highlighting the difference between the interior of the state and the Mississippi R, 73 on 8 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* was described as “an astonishing number for the date” (SJD), while 27,068

on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD) is rather typical for that date and location. The Pool 19 flock declined to a low of 380 on 17 Jan (SJD) before increasing to 995 on 7 Feb (SJD) and then 2,300 on 20 Feb (RLC). One at Milford Creek *Dickinson* on 16 Feb (LAS) and 2 on 21 Feb at Lansing *Allamakee* (DeC) were a bit early for that far north.

Redhead: Overwintering birds: up to 10 on Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD), 1 at Ft. Madison *Lee* (DP, JG), and 1–2 below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG).

Ring-necked Duck: High: 365 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). As many as 120 wintered on the river in *Lee* (SJD, JG).

Greater Scaup: From 1–4 were reported from *Cerro Gordo*, *Polk*, *Linn*, and *Black Hawk* (CJF, SJD, DE). The hot spot for this species was again the Mississippi R *Lee*. Counts from Pool 19 included 436 on 14 Dec, 439 on 17 Jan, and 291 on 7 Feb (SJD). On 24 Jan, 143 were at Fort Madison and another 45 were at Montrose (JG).

Lesser Scaup: High count: 1,210 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* where up to 29 wintered (SJD). Away from the Mississippi R, high counts were 36 on 2 Dec at Clear L (CJF) and 45 on 2–8 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD). A male wintered at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* (SJD, DTh, WO).

Surf Scoter: All: 1 on 2–3 Dec at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (CJF-ph, RGo), 1 at Cedar L *Linn* on 4–6 Dec (m.ob.), 1 on 9 Dec at Credit Island *Scott* (WMZ), and 1 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD).

Black Scoter: All: 1 on 4–6 Dec at Cedar Lake *Linn* (DP, m.ob.), 1 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 1 on 9 Dec at Credit Island *Scott* (WMZ), and 2 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD).

Long-tailed Duck: All: 1 on 4–6 Dec at Cedar Lake *Linn* (BT, m.ob.), 2 on 8 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 2 on 20 Dec at L&D 14 *Scott* (Albert Frohlich and Pat Carlson fide KJM), 1–3 from 13–17 Jan at Green Bay Bottoms *Lee* (JWR, DP, SJD), 1 on 7 Feb at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD), and 4 on 20 Feb at Pool 19 *Lee* (RLC).

Bufflehead: High: 40 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). The only post CBC reports were of 1–2 from 17 Jan–7 Feb in *Lee* (SJD, JG).

Common Goldeneye: The only large counts were from the Mississippi R in *Lee*: 4,793 on 14 Dec (SJD), 3,231 on 17 Jan (SJD), 3,428 on 24 Jan (JG), and 6,139 on 7 Feb (SJD). Small numbers wintered on open water at several locations, the northernmost being 5 at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH, BT).

Hooded Merganser: High: 21 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* where at least 3 overwintered (SJD). Mid-winter birds: up to 5 at Cedar Lake through 20 Jan (DP, BT) declining to 1 male by 17 Feb (BT), and 1 on 13–25 Jan at Ft. Madison *Lee* (JWR, DP, JLF). A male on 23 Feb at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (DTh) could have been an overwinterer or migrant.

Common Merganser: It was another dismal winter for this species in Iowa. High

counts: 370 on 8 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 838 on 11 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), and 945 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). Overwintering birds included over 400 on the Mississippi R *Lee* (SJD, JG), 150 on the Des Moines R below Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG), and 17 on the Des Moines R below Saylorville Res *Polk* (JG). Migrants had returned by mid-February.

Red-breasted Merganser: All: 4 on 8 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 11 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD), and 1 on 18 Dec at L&D 12 *Jackson* (KJM).

Ruddy Duck: High: 601 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). Mid-winter birds included 1 on 29 Dec at Cedar L *Linn* (BSc), 1 on 16 Jan at Ft. Madison *Lee* (DP), and 6 declining to 1 on 17 Jan–7 Feb at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). Fifteen migrants were at Pool 19 *Lee* on 20 Feb (RLC).

Gray Partridge: Due to the constant snow cover, this species was easier to find than normal. During the mid-winter birding lull, looking for coveys of partridge proved to be a popular activity with about 30 reports from 14 counties: *Boone, Bremer, Cerro Gordo, Emmet, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hancock, Kosuth, Palo Alto, Polk, Story, Tama, Worth, and Wright*. This is probably a fair representation of the species' current distribution in the state. Interestingly, the counties with the most reports, Guthrie, Polk, and Story, were all at the southern edge of the range where the species might be expected to be less common.



Black Scoter, Cedar L., Linn, 5 December 2009. Photograph by Tyler Harms, Ames, IA

Ring-necked Pheasant: Numbers were low, and the harsh weather packed birds into the best remaining habitat, resulting in a few decent counts: 35 on 10 Jan in *Hamilton* (JG), 163 on 10 Jan in *Boone* (SJD), 200 on 17 Jan in *Story* (RLC), 90 on 30 Jan in *Polk* (AB), 37 on 27 Feb in *Cerro*

Gordo (BT), and 45 on 28 Feb in *Story* (MHB).

Ruffed Grouse: 1 on 22 Dec at Yellow River State Forest *Allamakee* (KJM).

Wild Turkey: High: 144 on 16 Dec in *Buchanan* (KJM).

Northern Bobwhite: All: 10 on 13 Dec at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 12 on 5 Jan in *Decatur* (NMi).

Common Loon: All: 1 on 5 Dec, joined by a second on 6 Dec, at Pleasant Creek RA *Linn* (DP) and 2 on 8 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD).

Pied-billed Grebe: All: at Maffitt Res *Dallas/Polk*, 3 on 12 Dec (JG), 2 on 13 Dec (JB), then 1 on 19 Dec–1 Jan (JG); 2 on 12 Dec at Brushy Creek RA *Webster* (SJD); 1 on 16 Dec at Keokuk *Lee* (JLF); 1 on 27 Dec at Rutland *Humboldt* (JN); and 1 on 2 Jan on the Wapsipinicon R *Linn* (DLF).

Horned Grebe: 1 on 20 Feb at Pool 19 *Lee* (RLC) was early.

Western Grebe: 1 on 5–6 Dec at Pleasant Creek RA *Linn* (DP) and 2 on 5 Dec at Red Rock Res. *Marion* (SJD).

American White Pelican: High: 106 below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* on 11 Dec (SJD). An apparently injured bird was at Cedar L *Linn* on 1–26 Dec (BT, CRE, BSc). Healthy, successfully wintering birds included 16 below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* on 6 Feb (JG) and 3 below L&D 19 *Lee* on 7 Feb (SJD).

Double-crested Cormorant: High counts: 3 each at two locations in *Des Moines* on 19 Dec (JLF). All other reports were singles: 1 Dec at Cedar L *Linn* (DP), 10 Dec at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD, WO), 13 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (SJD), 13 Dec in *Mahaska* (SJD), and 13 Dec below the dam at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DTh).

Great Blue Heron: High count: 56 on 19 Dec in *Des Moines* (JLF). Wintering birds included up to 5 through the period



Long-tailed Duck, Pool 19, *Lee*, 17 January 2010. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA

at Credit Island *Scott* (WMZ), 1 at Cedar L *Linn* on 12 Jan (BT) and 2–6 Feb (BT, DP), 1 on 13 Jan in *Allamakee* (DK), 1 away from Cedar L in *Linn* on 2 Feb (MBa), 1–2 through the period on the Des Moines R below Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB, JB, DK), and up to 8 through the period on the Mississippi R *Lee* (SJD, JG).

Great Egret: 1 on 16 Dec at Green Bay Bottoms *Lee* (*JWR-ph, JLF) [second latest].

Black-crowned Night-Heron: An immature at Muscatine *Muscatine* on 26 Dec (*Bob Bryant).

Turkey Vulture: 2 on 27 Feb at Otter Creek Marsh *Tama* (DP) were about a week earlier than expected.

Bald Eagle: High counts for both the interior and the Mississippi River were much lower than normal: 92 on 16 Jan at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG) and 249 on 11 Jan on the Mississippi R *Clinton/Scott* (KJM).

Northern Harrier: High: 4 on 6 Feb at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC). Singles were reported from *Cass*, *Clinton*, *Butler*, *Dallas*, *Decatur*, *Jackson*, *Jasper*, *Louisa*, *Mills*, and *Scott*.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: There were 18 reports, scattered across the state.



Red-tailed Hawk dining on a Ring-necked Pheasant, Harrier M., Boone, 26 February 2010. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA

Cooper's Hawk: This species is inconsistently reported. The majority of reports came from Proescholdt (4), Kenne (5), and Dinsmore (12), who report all individuals they see, suggesting that good numbers were present.

Northern Goshawk: All: an ad on 2 Dec at Errington Marsh *Polk* (SJD) and presumably the same juv on both 15 Jan and 15 Feb at Ames *Story* (WO).

Red-shouldered Hawk: All reports were from known or potential breeding locations. Reports away from eastern Iowa were 1 on 13 Feb at Stephens State Forest–Whitebreast Unit *Lucas* (RLC) and 1 from 26 Jan through the season at Ledges SP *Boone* (SJD, DNR staff fide DCH).

Red-tailed Hawk: Harlan's were reported on 1 Dec–12 Feb at Colo Bogs WA *Story* (MPr), 2 Dec–28 Feb in *Polk* (JG), 19 Dec in *Dallas* (JB), and 16 Jan at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG).

Rough-legged Hawk: It was a relatively good winter for this species, with 40 reports totaling more than 55 birds. High counts: 4 on 16 Dec in *Buchanan* (POR) and 5 on 26 Feb in *Woodbury* (GLV).

Golden Eagle: All: 1 on 1 Dec near Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 1 juv on 22 Dec at Yellow River State Forest *Allamakee* (KJM), 1 on 1 Jan at Elk Creek Marsh *Worth* (RGo), an ad on 2 Jan at Broken Kettle Grasslands *Plymouth* (GLV, TLu), 3 ads on 5 Jan in *Clayton* (KJM), and a juv on 11 Jan in *Hancock* (CJF–details).

American Kestrel: Few were reported; the northernmost were four singles in *Black Hawk* (DE).

Merlin: 20 reports were received, representing 14 counties and at least 23 birds. Based on sex and race, it appears that 4–5 were present at Glendale Cemetery *Polk* this winter (RIC, JG). Of those reporting subspecies, 5 were *richardsoni* and 7 were *columbarius*.

Peregrine Falcon: All: 1–2 on 1 Dec–15 Feb at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 1 on 2 Dec at Des Moines *Polk* (RIC), 1 on 31 Dec at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (BSc), 1 on 11 Jan–3 Feb at Davenport *Scott* (POR, JLF), and 1 on 24 Jan at LeClaire *Scott* (JG).

Prairie Falcon: All: 1 on 7 Dec at the Pioneer fields *Polk* makes eight straight years that a bird has stopped at this location (JG). In *Woodbury*, 1 was found on 27 Jan at the Sioux Jersey Cattle Farm (POR). A second bird was located with the first at the same location on 30 Jan (Cory Gregory and Ashley Casey fide SJD). Both birds were reported through the end of February (m.ob.).

American Coot: Small numbers lingered at several locations. The latest were 15 on 24 Dec at Brushy Creek RA *Webster* (SJD) and 6 on 1 Jan at Maffitt Res *Dallas* (JG). At least 13 wintered at L&D 19 *Lee* (SJD).



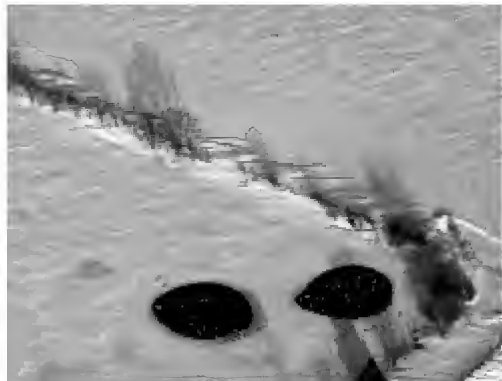
*Black-capped Chickadee,
Boone, 31 January 2010.
Photograph by Jim Moreland,
Boone, IA*



*Dark-eyed Junco of the Oregon subspecies,
Boone, 20 February 2010. Photograph by Larry
Dau, Boone, IA*



*An unidentified meadowlark, Brenton
Arboretum, Dallas, 23 February 2010.
Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes,
IA. This individual had features of both
Eastern and Western meadowlarks and
highlights the difficulty of identifying this
species in Iowa in winter.*



*Aerial view of wintering Trumpeter Swans and
other waterfowl, Beemer's Pond, Hamilton, 12
January 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland,
Boone, IA*



Red-bellied Woodpecker, Boone, 10 January 2010. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA



Female Merlin of the prairie race richardsonii, Woodbury, 22 February 2010. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA



Red-headed Woodpecker, Norwalk, Warren, 3 January 2010. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA



Bald Eagle feeding on a White-tailed Deer carcass, Don Williams L., Boone, 28 February 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA

Killdeer: Post-CBC birds included 1 on 13 Jan in *Des Moines* (JWR), 1 on 13 Jan in *Allamakee* (DK), 1–2 on 17 Jan–7 Feb at the Montrose marsh *Lee* (SJD, JG), and 1 on 19 Jan at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF).

Wilson's Snipe: All: 1 on 14 Dec–7 Feb at the Montrose marsh *Lee* (SJD), 1 on 16 Dec in *Des Moines* (JLF), and 1 on 21 Dec in *Clinton* (WMZ).

Bonaparte's Gull: All: 1 on 1 Dec at Ft. Madison *Lee* (JLF), 12 on 5 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), and 2 on 7 Dec at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD, WO).

Franklin's Gull: 1 juv on 4–5 Dec in *Polk* (SJD) and 1 ad on 5 Dec below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD).

Ring-billed Gull: Season high: 6,310 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD). High counts from Des Moines R locations: 1,681 on 5 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), 5,005 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 640 on 13 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (SJD), and 811 on 13 Dec in *Mahaska* (SJD). Spring migrants were noted back at Saylorville Res *Polk* on 24 Jan (JB, DTh).

Herring Gull: High counts: 186 on 11 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD) and 214 on 14 Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD).

Thayer's Gull: All: a juv on 5 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), a juv on 11 Dec below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), an ad on 13 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (SJD) and two ads there on 30 Dec (JG), and an ad and a juv on 3 Feb at L&D 14 *Scott* (JLF).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: All: a juv on 11 Dec below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), an ad and a 3rd basic on 14



Prairie Falcon, Woodbury, 2 February 2010. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA

Dec at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD), a 3rd basic on 30 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (JG), and an ad on 24–29 Jan at Cedar L *Linn* (BT, DP, JLF).

Glaucous Gull: All: a juv on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), a juv on 11 Dec below the dam at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), a juv on 19 Dec in *Appanoose* (RLC), a 2nd basic on 19 Jan at Ft. Madison *Lee* (JWR), and a 2nd basic on 29 Jan at Cedar L *Linn* (JLF).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: The excitement of reporting this “new” species has seemingly worn off, with reports from only about a dozen counties this winter. No large flocks were reported. High count: 31 on 30 Jan in *Hamilton* (SJD).

Mourning Dove: Few were reported. High count: 79 on 17 Dec in *Clinton* (KJM).

Eastern Screech-Owl: High: 5 at Bacon Creek P *Woodbury* on 19 Dec (BFH). One spent the winter in a Mason City Wood Duck box (CJF, RGo).

Great Horned Owl: There were very few reports of this common species. A pair was at a nest site at Lone Tree *Johnson* on 16 Jan through the end of the period (DP).

Snowy Owl: All: an ad male on 16 Dec in *Linn* (DP), 1 on 18 Dec in *Winnebago* (PH), and an ad male on 27 Feb in *Franklin* (DP, m.ob.).

Barred Owl: Irregularly but widely reported.

Long-eared Owl: All: 1 on 6 Dec at Hitchcock Nature Center *Pottawattamie* (Mark Orsag fide PH), 2 on 18 Dec in *Jackson* (KJM), 1 on 20 Dec at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE), 2 on 26 Dec at Pleasant Creek RA *Linn* (BSc), 2 on 1 Jan at Elk Creek Marsh *Worth* (RGo), 2 on 2 Jan in *Linn* (KJM), 1 on 6 Jan at Liscomb, *Marshall* (MPR), 2 on 9 Jan in *Decatur* (NMI), 1 on 15 Jan at Hickory Hills P *Tama* (TSS), 1 on 16 Jan at Cone Marsh *Louisa* (DP), and 1 on 8 Feb at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). This is both fewer reports and much smaller numbers of birds than normal. Perhaps the deep snow made hunting too difficult?

Short-eared Owl: High: 10 on 7 Dec at Luton WA *Woodbury* (TLu). Others included 3–4 on 7–11 Dec at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (TLu, GLV), 2 on 21 Dec in *Jackson* (WMZ), 2 on 14 Jan at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JLF), and singles on 29 Dec in *Guthrie* (SJD), 30 Dec at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS), and 5 Jan at Mallard Flats *Madison* (EEA).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: The high was 2 on 20 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk*, with one still there on 16 Jan (SJD). Singles were at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* on 6 Dec (DE), in *Clinton* on 21 Dec (WMZ), at Grammer Grove P *Marshall* on 1 Jan (MPR),



Eastern Screech-Owl, Montgomery, 23 February 2010. Photograph by Reid Allen, West Des Moines, IA

at Tunnel Mill WA *Hamilton* on 10 Jan (SJD), at Stephen's State Forest-Woodburn Unit *Clarke* on 24 Jan (JSi), and in Carolyn Fischer's yard in *Cerro Gordo* on 19 Feb (CJF, RGo). Generally considered to be difficult to find this winter.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: A juv female came to a feeder at Boone *Boone* through 3 Dec. On that date it was found incapacitated and was taken to a rehabilitator where it died on 9 Jan (Jenni Boonjakuakul fide SJD). The bird was photographed and the identification confirmed on 7 Dec by SJD. The specimen is now at Iowa State University.

Belted Kingfisher: A small number of wintering birds were reported. The northernmost was in *Plymouth* on 2 Jan (GLV).

Red-headed Woodpecker: There were very few reports this winter. High: 20 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (KJM).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Following last year's record-breaking numbers, fewer, but still more than average, were reported: 1–5 on 1 Dec–25 Jan at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 1 on 5 Dec–6 Feb at Lake Ahquabi SP/Hooper WA *Warren* (JSi), 1 on 7 Dec at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (PH), 1 on 12–16 Dec and 24 Jan in *Johnson* (JLF), 1 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (KJM), 1 on 19 Dec at Ames *Story* (WO), 1 on 2 Jan in *Linn* (KJM), 1 on 3–24 Jan in *Decatur* (NMI), 2 on 5 Jan in *Clayton* (KJM), 1 on 19 Jan at Ankeny *Polk* (DK), and 1 on 7 Feb in *Lee* (SJD).

Northern Flicker: There were only three post-CBC reports: 1 on 5 Jan at Waterworks P *Polk* (JB), 1 on 19 Feb in *Cass* (MP), and 2 on 20 Feb in *Monona* (GLV).

Pileated Woodpecker: All reports were from the eastern half of the state, with the westernmost being 1 on 5 Jan at Waterworks P *Polk* (JB) and 2 on 19 Feb in *Decatur* (NMI).

Loggerhead Shrike: All: 1 on 19 Dec in *Adams* (SJD), 2 on 19 Dec in *Union* (SJD), and 1 on 7 Feb in *Henry* (SJD).

Northern Shrike: It was another good winter for shrikes, with reports scattered over most of the state. The southernmost were 1 on 18 Jan–28 Feb at Rapp P *Page* (KDY), 1 on 16 Feb in *Decatur* (NMI), and 1 on 22 Feb in *Fremont* (KDY).

Black-billed Magpie: 2 on 2 Jan at Broken Kettle Grasslands *Plymouth* (TLu, GLV, POR).

Horned Lark: High: 389 on 12 Feb in *Woodbury* (GLV).

Tufted Titmouse: 1, to the northwest of the normal range at the Lutter residence in Bronson *Woodbury* (TLu), continued from the fall.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This species

was reported from all across the state, but did not seem to be particularly abundant. High: 7 on 7 Feb in *Lee* (SJD).

Brown Creeper: More seemed to overwinter this year than last. Birds in northern Iowa included 15 on 5 Jan in *Clayton* (KJM), 1 on 21 Feb at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (PH), 2 on 23 Feb at Sioux City *Woodbury* (GLV), and 2 on 24 Feb in *Sioux* (POR).

Carolina Wren: Despite a tough winter last year, good numbers were still reported this season, although none to the north or west of *Boone*. High: 20 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (SJD).

Winter Wren: Non-CBC reports: 1–3 on 1 Dec–15 Feb at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 1 on 19 Dec at Pammel Woods *Story* (LGD), 1 on 19 Dec at Ames, *Story* (WO), 1 on 20 Dec at Camp Dodge *Polk* (JG), 1 on 31 Dec at Woodland Mounds *Warren* (JSi), 1 on 1 Jan in *Warren* (JSi), 1 on 17 Jan in *Lee* (SJD), and 1 on 11 Feb at Pine Lake SP *Hardin* (TSS). Winter Wren will soon be split into an eastern and a western species. Observers should be aware of the plumage and vocal differences between the two and watch for vagrants from the west.

Marsh Wren: All: 1 on 3 Dec at Anderson L *Hamilton* (SJD) and 1 on 17 Jan–7 Feb at the Montrose marsh *Lee* (SJD-ph).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: All: 1 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (KJM), 4 on 18 Dec in *Jackson* (KJM), 1 on 19 Dec at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (KJM), 2 on 19 Dec at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 1 on 20 Dec in *Cherokee* (POR), 2 on 22 Dec at Yellow River State Forest *Allamakee* (KJM), 1 on 2 Jan in *Linn* (KJM), and 2 on 19 Feb at Fairmount Cemetery *Scott* (WMZ).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: None reported.

Eastern Bluebird: Small numbers were reported across southern Iowa. High: 19 on 31 Jan at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY).



Savannah Sparrow, Three Mile L., Union, 19 December 2009.
 Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA

Townsend's Solitaire: 1 on 5 Dec along Mill Creek in *Cherokee* (DB).

Swainson's Thrush: 1 was present at a feeder in Iowa City *Johnson* from mid-November through 9 December (Clarence and Alda Hightshoe fide JLF; first definite winter record for Iowa). Initially identified by the homeowners as a Veery, Jim and Karole Fuller observed the bird on 7 Dec and identified it as a Swainson's (*JLF, Karole Fuller-ph).

Hermit Thrush: 1 on 15 Dec in *Guthrie* (KJM), 1 on 10 Jan in *Fremont* (KDy), and 1 on 19 Jan at Yellow River State Forest *Allamakee* (DK). The 4 on 27 Dec at Lake Ahquabi SP could not be relocated later in the winter (JSi).

American Robin: It was a down year for wintering robins. High: 21 on 17 Jan in *Lee* (SJD).

Varied Thrush: A male, seen by many at a Ventura *Cerro Gordo* feeder, was present 30 Dec through the end of the period (CJF, m.ob.).

Gray Catbird: 1 on 16 Dec in *Decatur* (NMi).

Northern Mockingbird: All: 1 on 18

Dec in *Appanoose* (RLC) and 1 on 10 Jan in *Decatur* (NMi).

Brown Thrasher: 1 on 6–9 Feb at a feeder in *Johnson* (JLF) and 1 at a feeder in *Warren* through 15 Feb (Russ and Robin Vanderhoet-ph fide JSi).

American Pipit: 1 on 25 Jan at Keokuk *Lee* (*JWR, JLF).

Cedar Waxwing: The only triple digit flocks reported were 120 on 2 Jan in *Van Buren* (RLC) and 150 on 30 Jan at Hooper

WA *Warren* (JSi).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: All: 5 on 18 Dec in *Appanoose* (RLC) and 1 on 25 Dec at Medicine Creek WA *Wayne* (AB).

Spotted Towhee: No reports.

Eastern Towhee: All: a female was at a feeder on 30 Jan through late Feb at Decorah *Winneshiek* (Rachel Sandhorst-ph).

Chipping Sparrow: One reported without details.

Vesper Sparrow: One reported without details.

Savannah Sparrow: All: 3 on 13 Dec at St. Mary's Island WA *Mills* (LJP/BKP-details), 1 on 19 Dec in *Dallas* (*KVS), 1 on 19 Dec at Twelve Mile L *Union* (SJD-ph).

Fox Sparrow: High: 3 on 14 Feb at Fairmont Cemetery *Scott* (WMZ). Birds wintering in northern Iowa included singles on 11 Dec–26 Feb at Decorah *Winneshiek* (Rose M. Weigel), 28 Dec and 7–8 Jan in *Cerro Gordo* (CJF), 31 Dec–19 Feb at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (RGo), and 2 Jan in *Plymouth* (TLu).

Song Sparrow: Commonly reported from Mississippi R counties. The north-

ernmost interior birds were 2 wintering in *Boone* (LGD).

Swamp Sparrow: High count: 12 on 13 Dec at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDi).

White-throated Sparrow: High count: 37 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (KJ). Smaller numbers were reported throughout the state.

Harris's Sparrow: All, singles: 16 Dec in *Buchanan* (KJ), 19 Dec at Brown's L *Woodbury* (BFH), 20 Dec in *Cherokee* (POR), 2 Jan at Saylorville WA *Boone* (WO), 2 Jan at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS), 3 Jan–19 Feb at Ames *Story* (WO), and 28 Jan at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR).

White-crowned Sparrow: All: 1 on 2 Jan in *Van Buran* (RLC), up to 3 from 17 Jan–20 Feb in *Lee* (SJD, JWR, RLC), 7 on 31 Jan at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDi), and 1 through the season at Corydon *Wayne* (AB).

Dark-eyed Junco: Oregon group juncos were at Ames *Story* on 3 Dec–14 Feb (SJD), *Page* on 17 Jan (KDi), and Bronson *Woodbury* on 30 Jan (TLu).

Lapland Longspur: High counts: 534 on 19 Dec in *Marion* (SJD) and 274 on 20 Dec in *Cherokee* (POR). Large for southern Iowa were flocks of 150 in *Keokuk* on 20–21 Feb (BSc, CRE).

Snow Bunting: Fairly common and widely reported, this species was easier to find than in most winters due to the continuous snow cover. The high count by far was 1,665 on 13 Feb in *Hamilton* (SJD). Other large flocks were 330 on 10 Jan in *Cerro Gordo* (JG), 220 on 10 Jan in *Wright* (JG), 250 on 10 Feb in *Hardin* (MP), 330 on 25 Feb in *Cerro Gordo* (RIA/PHA), and 300 on 27 Feb in *Cerro Gordo* (DP).

Red-winged Blackbird: The very low high count for the winter

was 40 at Riverton WA *Fremont* on 31 Jan (KDi).

Eastern Meadowlark: All: 3 on 15 Dec in *Guthrie* were identified as Eastern by call (KJ).

Western Meadowlark: High count: Up to 25 on 12–28 Feb at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV, POR), some of which were identified as the expected Westerns.

meadowlark species: A silent meadowlark photographed by JB on 13 Feb in *Dallas* has a number of features suggestive of Eastern, but could not be definitively identified.

Rusty Blackbird: High count: Approximately 100 in *Des Moines* on 25 Jan (JLF) and 9 on 7 Jan in *Cerro Gordo* (CJF). From 1–3 were reported from eight other counties, most at feeders.

Brewer's Blackbird: Two reports of single birds without details. This species is extremely rare in winter and is often confused with Rusty Blackbird, which is more likely to occur. All winter reports require details or photos.

Common Grackle: Very few were reported. High count: 14 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (KJ).

Great-tailed Grackle: No reports.



Rusty Blackbird, Boone, 16 December 2009. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA

Brown-headed Cowbird: High count: 250 in *Clinton* on 21 Dec (WMZ).

Purple Finch: Only about a dozen reports, mostly groups of 1–4. High counts: 30 on 23 Dec at Lake Ahquabi SP *Warren* (JSi), 35 on 16 Jan at Worth County P *Worth* (PH), and 27 on 20 Feb at Bertram Reservation *Clay* (LAS).

Red Crossbill: No reports.

White-winged Crossbill: No reports.

Common Redpoll: All: 1 on 31 Jan through the end of the period at a feeder in Gilbert *Story* (Amy Morrow fide SJD, ph).

Pine Siskin: All: 2 on 14 Dec at Bronson *Woodbury* (TLu), 6 on 16 Dec and 3

on 15 Feb at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 1 on 2 Jan in *Linn* (KJM), 2 on 29 Jan at Iowa Falls *Hardin* (MPr), and 1 on 23 Feb at Wellsburg *Grundy* (MPr); birds at *Cerro Gordo* feeders were 5 on 1 Dec–28 Feb (RGo), 8 on 14 Dec–19 Feb (CJF), and 2 on 21 Feb (PH).

American Goldfinch: High count: 68 in *Boone* on 12–14 Dec (LGD).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: Reported from *Iowa, Scott, Louisa, Des Moines*, and *Lee*. The high count was 19 on 14 Dec in *Lee* (KJM). The 4 at Marengo *Iowa* on 19 Dec (CE) may represent the current north-west extent of the range.

CONTRIBUTORS

Reid/Pam Allen	RIA/PHA	W Des Moines	Nathan Miller	NMi	Davis City
Eugene Armstrong	EEA	Van Meter	Jacob Newton	JN	Ottosen
Matthew Baumann	MBa	Robins	Josh Obrecht	JOB	Ames
Dick Bierman	DB	Cherokee	Wolfgang Oesterreich	WO	Ames
John Bissell	JB	Grimes	Loren/Babs Padelford	LJP/BKP	Bellevue, NE
Aaron Brees	AB	Des Moines	Diana Pesek	DP	Cedar Rapids
Mark Brown	MHB	Iowa City	Marietta Peterson	MP	Walnut
Dennis Carter	DeC	Decorah	Mark Proescholdt	MPr	Liscomb
Robert Cecil	RIC	Des Moines	Paul Roisen	POR	Sioux City
Raymond Cummins	RLC	Centerville	John Rutenbeck	JWR	Burlington
Larry Dau	LGD	Boone	William Scheible	BSc	Cedar Rapids
Stephen J. Dinsmore	SJD	Ames	Tom Schilke	TSS	Waterloo
Keith Dyche	KDy	Shenandoah	Lee Schoenewe	LAS	Spencer
David Eastman	DE	Cedar Falls	Jim Sinclair	JSi	Indianola
Chris Edwards	CRE	Solon	Dennis Thompson	DTh	Johnston
Carolyn Fischer	CJF	Mason City	Bill Tollefson	BT	Cedar Rapids
Jim Fuller	JLF	Iowa City	Karen Viste-Sparkman	KVS	Des Moines
Dale Fye	DLF	Cedar Rapids	Gerald Von Ehwegen	GLV	Sioux City
Jacob Gilliam	JG	Norwalk	Rose M. Weigel		Decorah
Rita Goranson	RGo	Mason City	Hank Zaletel	HZ	Nevada
Doug Harr	DCH	Ogden	Walter Zuurdeeg	WMZ	Davenport
Paul Hertzfel	PH	Mason City			
Bill Huser	BFH	S. Sioux City, NE			
Matthew Kenne	MCK	Algona			
Darwin Koenig	DK	Ankeny			
Tucker Lutter	TLu	Bronson			
Kelly McKay	KJM	Hampton, IL			

In addition, Mark Carson, Bery Engebretsen, Tyler Harms, Jeff Nichols, Diane Porter, and Matt Wetrich provided reports used in cumulative species counts.

6759 NW 6th Drive, Des Moines, IA 50313 (abrees@hotmail.com)

Iowa Christmas Bird Count, 2009–2010

Chris Caster

Forty-seven counts were held this season. Four counts that had been run last year were canceled due to bad weather: NW Clayton County, Eldora-Union, Ida County, and Taylor County. The Worth County count returned after a two-year absence.

According to the Iowa State Climatologist's Office, December 2009 was the 2nd wettest in 137 years. Seventeen counts reported snow depths of a foot or more. North winds predominated and eight counts reported high temperatures below zero.

The species count this season was 131, somewhat below the 10-year average of 135. The total number of birds (366,782) counted was the lowest since the 2000–2001 season. Once again Keokuk had the highest count with 88 species, a position it has now held in 8 of the last 9 counts. Not only was it the earliest count, but it was also the warmest and the only one not reporting snow-cover. Other high counts included Davenport (77), Burlington (74), Clinton (71), and Saylorville (69). Omaha (68) led the Missouri River counts and Spirit Lake (47) led the Northern Third.

The average count this year had 11 people, 5 field parties, and found 53 species.

REGULAR SPECIES

Eleven species were recorded in record numbers this season, but it was a generally unremarkable count from a species and numbers standpoint. Frequently reported species are recorded in Table 2. Species found on three or fewer count are shown in Table 3.

A lone Greater White-fronted Goose was at Cedar Falls-Waterloo. Snow Geese (6) have been scarce on the past three counts, but this year's total was the lowest in more than 20 years. There were no Ross's Geese reported. Cackling Geese (119) and Canada Geese (50,158) were also below average. Trumpeter Swans (144) were found in record numbers. An astonishing 72 were reported from SE Webster County. No Tundra or Mute Swans were reported. Puddle ducks numbers were extremely low. Even Mallards (15,337) were the scarcest they have been in more than twenty years.

Diving ducks were found in decent numbers. Canvasbacks (29,822) were the most abundant divers. Greater Scaup (494) were nearly all at Keokuk. Common Goldeneye (11,606) were found in record numbers. Thirty-three Red-breasted Mergansers were the most since 2001–2002. It was also a good year for Ruddy Ducks (820). It was an exceptional year for sea ducks. Eight Surf Scoters was easily the most ever. White-winged Scoters (5), Black Scoters (2), and Long-tailed Ducks (3) were also found.

Gray Partridges (102) were found on nine counts. Ring-necked Pheasants (1,910) and Wild Turkey (3,031) were in good numbers. Yellow River Forest came through with the only Ruffed Grouse. Northern Bobwhites (88) were below average—29 at Shenandoah was the high count.

Pied-billed Grebes (8) were found on just five counts. American White Pelicans (179) were found in good numbers, second only to last year's record of 474. Before last year the

ten-year average had been only 30 birds. It will be interesting to see if this becomes a trend. Double-crested Cormorants (7) were scarce, but Great Blue Herons (186) were plentiful.

Although reported from every count, Bald Eagles (2,285) were at their lowest numbers in eight years. Northern Harriers (43) neared a 20-year low. Sharp-shinned Hawks (64) and Cooper's Hawks (93) were about average. The only Northern Goshawk was reported from Muscatine. Red-shouldered Hawks (9) and Red-tailed Hawks (1,769) were at their averages. Rough-legged Hawks (175) were found in good numbers. Nine Golden Eagles was a new record. Two were at Yellow River Forest and three were at SE Clayton County. American Kestrels (439) rebounded somewhat, but this is now the third year in a row they've posted numbers well below average. And this was the third lowest total in twenty years. Merlins (4) disappointed as they had been found in double-digit numbers during the previous five years. Peregrine Falcons (5) tied their record high and were found on four counts. No Prairie Falcons were reported.

American Coots (68) were scarce. Killdeer (11) were even scarcer. Wilson's Snipes (6) were at their lowest numbers in more than twenty years. Ring-billed Gulls (11,601) and Herring Gulls (681) were also well below average. No Thayer's Gulls were reported. Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Keokuk and a Glaucous Gull was at Rathbun.

Rock Pigeons (9,338) were at somewhat below average numbers. Eurasian Collared-Doves (540) again set a new high count. Mourning Doves (3,362) had their lowest count in five years.

Eastern Screech-Owls (129) rebounded nicely after last year's abysmal sixty-four birds. Great Horned Owls (218) and Barred Owls (169) also had above average numbers. Long-eared Owls (38) were somewhat below average. After two remarkable years, Short-eared Owls (7) fell to average numbers. Considering the difficulty of walking deep snow, it is perhaps surprising that even four Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported this season, because there have been even lower saw-whet counts.

Belted Kingfishers (69) had their second lowest total in nine years. Red-headed, Red-bellied, Hairy, and Pileated woodpeckers all had at least average years. Downy Woodpeckers (3,082) set a new record high. It was a very good year for Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (43). Northern Flickers (406) have fluctuated wildly in recent years—after setting record highs in two of the last three years, their numbers fell to a 20-year low.

Northern Shrikes (34) were average, while Loggerhead Shrikes (2) were scarce. Blue Jays (5,913) were at their highest numbers in twenty years. Horned Larks (8,248) had their best count in nine years. Black-capped Chickadee (7,048) numbers rebounded dramatically after last year's 20-year low, as did Tufted Titmice (969), which set a new record high. It wasn't an eruption year, but Red-breasted Nuthatches (172) were seen in good numbers. White-breasted Nuthatches (3,137), Brown Creepers (300), Carolina Wrens (150), and Winter Wrens (34) also posted good numbers. Golden-crowned Kinglets (42) were not common and no Ruby-crowned Kinglets were reported.

After last year's record setting numbers, the thrushes were all near 10-year lows. Eastern Bluebirds (381), Hermit Thrushes (10), American Robins (380) were scarce. Northern Mockingbirds (5) returned to average numbers. Gray Catbirds (3) were at Burlington, Ames, and Saylorsville. A Brown Thrasher was at Lamoni. Cedar Waxwings (3,125) and Yellow-rumped Warblers (13) were both below average. European Starlings (46,351) were

somewhat below average. Keokuk counted an amazing 8,265 starlings, where they outnumbered eagles 20:1.

Sparrow numbers were generally good. A Spotted Towhee was at DeSoto NWR and single Eastern Towhees were reported from Andalusia, Dallas County, and Rathbun. American Tree Sparrows (10,590), Song Sparrows (704), Lincoln's Sparrows (5), White-throated Sparrows (400), and White-crowned Sparrows (75) were all about average. Swamp Sparrows (164) were found in numbers well above average, while Harris's Sparrows (118) were well below average. Dark-eyed Juncos (30,869) were at near record numbers. Lapland Longspurs (2,784) were abundant. Perhaps unexpectedly, Snow Buntings (480) were below average. Northern Cardinals (8,725) were at near record numbers.

It was a sub-par year for icterids. Red-winged Blackbirds (2,678) were near the 10-year low. Meadowlarks (308), Rusty Blackbirds (74), and Common Grackles (314), and Brown-headed Cowbirds (1,315) were all below average. Brewer's Blackbirds (3) were reported from SE Webster County and Shenandoah.

Purple Finches (488) and House Finches (2,150) were both below average. No redpolls were reported. It was a poor year for Pine Siskins (44) and American Goldfinches (4,571) were below average. Even House Sparrows (22,710) were below average. However, Eurasian Tree Sparrows (1,233) were again found in good numbers. West Mercer County had 626 and Keokuk had 408, both excellent counts. Seven at Princeton, seven at Iowa City, and fifteen at Amana were the extralimital birds.

NOTABLE MISSES

The most notable miss was surely Thayer's Gull, reported on each of the previous 23 counts. Also missed were Tundra Swan, Common Redpoll (9 of last 10), Ross's Goose, Ruby-crowned Kinglet (8 of last 10), Common Loon, Marsh Wren (7 of last 10), Bonaparte's Gull (6 of last 10) Mute Swan, American Pipit, Great-tailed Grackle (5 of last 10).

UNCOMMON SPECIES

The best bird may have been a Snowy Owl reported from DeSoto NWR as a count week bird. A Sandhill Crane at Burlington was a nice surprise. Other good birds included a Yellow-headed Blackbird at Spirit Lake and an immature Black-crowned Night-Heron at Muscatine. A Vesper Sparrow was at Lamoni and a Field Sparrow was at Saylorville. Ten Savannah Sparrows were a count record. Seven of those were at Shenandoah, and single birds were at Green Island, Dallas County, and Rathbun. A White-winged Crossbill was at Clinton. Three Black-billed Magpies were found at Westfield. And new to the count were two Ringed Turtle-Doves found with a flock of Eurasian Collared-Doves at Lamoni.

4 South Ridge Court, Coralville, IA 52241 (cjcaster@earthlink.net)

Table 1. Site Data for 2009–2010 Christmas Bird Counts

Location	Date	Total		Field		Miles		Owling		Feeder		Temp		Snow	Wind	
		Species	Birds	Obs	Pts	Hr	Car	Ft	Hr	Mi	Pt	L	H			Depth
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																
1. Yellow River Forest	22-Dec	60	3,820	6	4	29.5	291	5.5	2	20	1	1	23	32	20	E 5-15
2. SE Clayton County	5-Jan	46	3,065	2	1	9.75	80	0.5	1.5	20	2	1.5	-5	14	10	NW 0-5
3. Dubuque	2-Jan	43	2,958	16	7	45.75	225	7.5	0.25	0	1	1	-9	4	4	NNW 8-16
4. Green Island	18-Dec	65	6,133	16	6	48	384	7.5	2.25	28	0	0	28	34	7	N 5-11
5. Clinton	21-Dec	71	5,146	7	3	26	224	2	4	47	4	4	28	34	5	SE 0-5
6. Princeton	23-Dec	63	3,870	10	4	28	282	3.5	5.25	57	1	1	30	33	4	E 20-30
7. Davenport	20-Dec	77	14,716	15	6	51.75	417	9.25	8	63	12	24	26	35	3	NE 0-5
8. Andalusia	4-Jan	58	3,770	7	3	29.75	325	4.5	4.5	35	0	0	-5	9	3	NW 5-15
9. Muscatine	26-Dec	68	7,007	13	5	41.75	369	5.75	5.25	51	9	10	21	27	7	SE 5-15
10. West Mercer County	30-Dec	66	8,960	8	5	43	330	7.75	7	63	0	0	28	36	6	SE 5-15
11. Burlington	19-Dec	74	7,250	13	4	40	235	28	1	10	2	8	27	29	2	N 5-10
12. Keokuk	14-Dec	88	84,021	12	6	57	477	9.5	1	10	0	0	28	38	0	N 5-10
MISSOURI RIVER																
13. Westfield	2-Jan	44	2,105	9	3	25	268.5	3	1	0.25	1	4	4	28	12	SE 5
14. Sioux City	19-Dec	63	21,716	15	7	97.75	452	10.25	3	5	4	2	20	23	12	NW 5-15
15. De Soto NWR	30-Dec	51	4,983	12	6	34.5	298.5	4.5	1.5	16	2	4	27	28	16	SE 3-9
16. Omaha	19-Dec	68	10,652	31	9	61.25	442.5	23.5	1.75	31.5	3	6.5	19	24	8	NW 0-15
NORTHERN THIRD																
17. Decorah	2-Jan	39	3,413	8	4	27	294	2	2	20	5	8	-19	-1	20	NNW 0-5
18. Bremer County	19-Dec	45	4,593	6	4	28	329	4	0	0	0	0	23	27	10	N 5-20
19. Worth County	1-Jan	31	806	3	2	16	227	5.5	0	0	0	0	-7	-2	16	NW 8-10
20. Mason City	19-Dec	45	11,097	11	7	54	385	11.7	0	0	7	10	19	23	12	NW 10-17
21. Spirit Lake	19-Dec	47	4,254	3	2	14	185	5	0.25	0	25	87	18	24	6	N 5-10
22. Humboldt County	27-Dec	25	757	1	1	9	117	2	0	0	0	0	4	24	36	NNW 5-15
23. Cherokee	20-Dec	42	3,699	6	4	28	358	2	2	11	4	14	23	30	8	SSW 5-10
MIDDLE THIRD																
24. Lost Nation	17-Dec	53	7,162	13	5	37.5	477	4.5	3.25	33	1	4	20	30	7	NNW 0-3
25. North Linn	2-Jan	57	4,382	9	6	66.75	434	4.5	1.5	13	1	2	-19	-4	8	NW 9-15
26. Cedar Rapids	19-Dec	53	11,657	14	6	68.75	426	6	2.75	29	2	10	26	30	6	NNW 10-17
27. Iowa City	20-Dec	57	5,873	29	11	61	485	16	5	47	12	38	25	27	1	S 4-10

Location	Date	Total Species	Total Birds	Field Obs	Field Pts	Hr	Miles Car	Ft	Owling Hr	Mi	Feeder Pt	Hr	Temp L	Temp H	Snow Depth	Wind
28. Amara	26-Dec	42	1,080	8	2	14	42	6	2	5	2	5	20	23	4	N 0-5
29. Buchanan County	16-Dec	48	3,861	7	4	27.25	329	2.75	0.75	8	3	2.5	-9	17	8	var. 0-5
30. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	20-Dec	51	18,483	10	8	46	441	11	2	15	1	2	22	27	11	N 0-5
31. Marshalltown	2-Jan	30	2,325	9	4	17	188	0	0	0	6	18	-18	-7	12	calm
32. Grinnell	19-Dec	31	973	8	2	24	75	9	1	0	1	8	22	28	8	NW 1-8
33. Ames	19-Dec	58	18,817	32	14	76.5	418	41	3	23.5	8	19	19	27	6	NW 9-18
34. Saylorville Reservoir	20-Dec	69	13,213	20	11	79.5	678	34.5	5.5	44	0	0	23	32	14	NW 10-20
35. Des Moines	26-Dec	63	9,020	6	5	34	309	10	1	3	7	24	14	20	10	NW 5-10
36. Neal Smith NWR	2-Jan	37	1,128	18	6	22.25	156.25	8.25	0	0	2	4	-18	-4	19	NW 8-12
37. SE Webster County	2-Jan	38	1,869	6	2	5	100	0.3	1	6	0	0	-28	-14	24	N 5-10
38. Boone County	2-Jan	50	6,565	29	16	87.5	683	23.75	6.5	42.5	15	61.35	-17	-4	15	N 0-10
39. Jamaica	15-Dec	52	4,118	5	3	27.25	254	9.5	0.5	8	0	0	-4	7	13	W 8-12
40. Dallas County	19-Dec	60	5,359	16	7	46	398	12.5	2	1	10	38	14	25	22	W 3-18
41. Sac County	2-Jan	29	928	11	na	10	102	2	0	0	5	24	-7	-2	25	E 0-4
42. Carroll County	3-Jan	34	1,352	3	3	18	111	1.5	0	0	3	9.5	-1	7	14	NW 5-10
SOUTHERN THIRD																
43. Wapello County	30-Dec	32	2,117	5	2	6.5	78	2.5	0	0	1	1.5	19	32	1.5	S 9-14
44. Red Rock Reservoir	19-Dec	66	9,380	8	7	32	361	11.5	1.5	17	0	0	20	28	4	NNW 0-15
45. Rathbun Reservoir	19-Dec	68	5,282	13	5	47	470	6.5	5.5	52	7	12	15	25	6	NNW 0-15
46. Lamoni	29-Dec	63	6,165	22	5	43.5	136	40.5	2	1	2	18	0	25	8	N 0-5
47. Shenandoah	19-Dec	60	6,882	8	5	33.5	332	2	1	5	13	13	24	31	7	NW 2-5
TOTALS		131	366,782													

2010 IOU Photo Contest Winners

IOU is pleased to announce the 2010 photography contest winners. Entries this year were judged by Ty Smedes, Karen Viste-Sparkman, and John Wenck.

Second Place Electronic Entry
Le Conte's Sparrow
14 October 2008
Errington Marsh, Polk County
Canon 40D/Canon 100-400mm Zoom
Reid Allen, West Des Moines



First Place Mounted Photograph
Red-shouldered Hawk
23 May 2008

George Wyth Memorial Park, Black Hawk County
Canon 30D/Canon 500mm f4 + 1.4 extender
J. Scott Garrett, Cedar Falls



Third Place Electronic Entry
Virginia Rail
17 September 2008
Snake Creek Marsh, Greene County
Canon Rebel XT/Canon 100-400mm
Larry Dau, Boone



First Place Electronic Entry
Yellow-breasted Chat
11 July 2009
Shimek State Forest, Lee County
Canon 40D/Canon 100-400mm Zoom
Reid Allen, West Des Moines



Second Place Mounted Photograph
Snow Bunting
5 March 2010
Boone County
Canon 7D/Canon 100-400mm
Larry Dau, Boone

Honorable Mention
Electronic Entry
Tufted Titmouse
7 December 2009
Ledges State Park,
Boone County
Olympus ED
26X Wide Zoom
Doug Harr, Ogden



Honorable Mention Electronic Entry
Red-tailed Hawk
26 December 2009

Harrier Marsh, Boone County
Canon 7D/Canon 100–400mm
Larry Dau, Boone

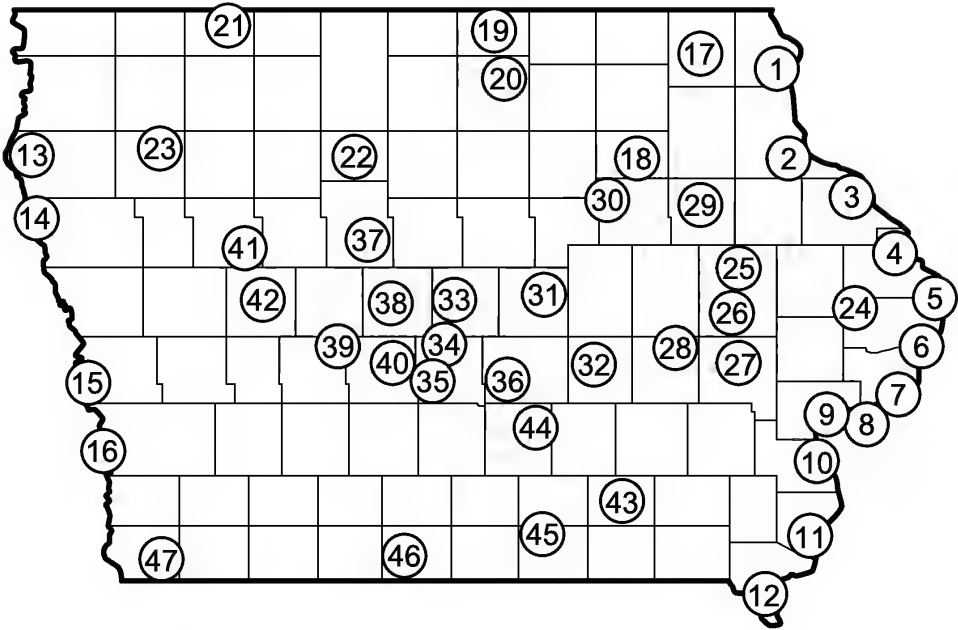


Figure 1. Christmas bird counts in Iowa, 2009–2010 (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2a. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2009–2010

Location	Cack Go	Ca Go	Tr Sw	Wo Du	Ga	Am Bl Du	Ma	No Sh	No Pi
MISSISSIPPI RIVER									
1. Yellow River Forest		2				1	358		
2. SE Clayton County									
3. Dubuque		205				1	159		
4. Green Island		31					21		
5. Clinton		17	3			3	47		
6. Princeton		202	2	2		1	71		
7. Davenport		1306	8	1	2	5	1861		
8. Andalusia		552	1				74		
9. Muscatine		538					89		
10. West Mercer County		1050					6		
11. Burlington	20	2020			2		48		
12. Keokuk	44	6583	2	2	30	7	1176		1
Subtotals	64	12506	16	5	34	18	3910	0	1
MISSOURI RIVER									
13. Westfield							27		
14. Sioux City	8	9111		1	11	cw	5116	3	2
15. De Soto NWR	26	140					2		
16. Omaha	26	2813	1				411	8	
Subtotals	34	12064	1	1	11	0	5556	11	2
NORTHERN THIRD									
17. Decorah		171					1		
18. Bremer County		7					18		
19. Worth County		70					2		
20. Mason City		646				1	1407		
21. Spirit Lake	2	1486			7	1	374	3	1
22. Humboldt County		51					101		
23. Cherokee									
Subtotals	2	2431	0	0	7	2	1903	3	1
MIDDLE THIRD									
24. Lost Nation		81	11						
25. North Linn	2	150					20		
26. Cedar Rapids		2623		1		1	1122		
27. Iowa City		87					88		
28. Amana		50							
29. Buchanan County		45					138		
30. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	4	4175	36		1	5	1020		
31. Marshalltown		100					4		
32. Grinnell		91					43		
33. Ames		633				1	187		
34. Saylorville Reservoir	4	3173		1		1	135		
35. Des Moines	2	5733	7		1		679		1
36. Neal Smith NWR									
37. SE Webster County	2	15	72			1	15		
38. Boone County		16					6		
39. Jamaica	4	1126					40		
40. Dallas County		329					7		
41. Sac County		3					61		
42. Carroll County									
Subtotals	18	18430	126	2	2	9	3565	0	1
SOUTHERN THIRD									
43. Wapello County		730		1			32		
44. Red Rock Reservoir	1	2903	1			1	188		
45. Rathbun Reservoir		1079					160		
46. Lamoni		1							
47. Shenandoah		14					23	1	
Subtotals	1	4727	1	1		1	403	1	0
TOTALS	119	50158	144	9	54	30	15337	15	5

Table 2b. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2009–2010

Location	Am Wh Pe	Gr Bl He	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Sh Ha	Co Ha	Re Sh Ha	Re Ta Ha	Ro Le Ha
MISSISSIPPI RIVER									
1. Yellow River Forest			75			1		35	10
2. SE Clayton County			45					16	7
3. Dubuque		3	42			4		55	5
4. Green Island		3	90	1	2		1	88	16
5. Clinton		2	107	1	1	3		45	10
6. Princeton		8	32		2	1		19	
7. Davenport		8	110	1	4	2	1	49	
8. Andalusia			55	1		1		41	1
9. Muscatine		21	141	2	4	2		37	4
10. West Mercer County		12	84	4	3	3	1	31	10
11. Burlington	43	71	256	6	2	4		31	6
12. Keokuk	117	35	413	6	3	1		51	5
Subtotals	160	163	1450	22	21	22	3	498	74
MISSOURI RIVER									
13. Westfield			8			4		30	8
14. Sioux City			7		2	3		73	3
15. De Soto NWR			24	3	3	1		61	5
16. Omaha			36	5	1	2		86	1
Subtotals	0	0	75	8	6	10	0	250	17
NORTHERN THIRD									
17. Decorah			24			2		61	3
18. Bremer County			26			4	1	24	3
19. Worth County			1					7	
20. Mason City			6	1	2	3		17	1
21. Spirit Lake			2		1	1		5	
22. Humboldt County			9			3		4	
23. Cherokee			10		2			23	1
Subtotals	0	0	78	1	5	13	1	141	8
MIDDLE THIRD									
24. Lost Nation		2	114	1	2	1		51	11
25. North Linn			25		1	2		41	2
26. Cedar Rapids	1		41		2	3		61	9
27. Iowa City		4	50		2	4		50	3
28. Amana			25	2				21	2
29. Buchanan County			27		1	1		26	6
30. Cedar Falls-Waterloo			15		1	2	3	34	6
31. Marshalltown			17		2			26	
32. Grinnell		1	6		1	1		4	
33. Ames			11		4	9		96	2
34. Saylorville Reservoir		1	25		1	3	1	63	3
35. Des Moines		1	56		2	2		53	1
36. Neal Smith NWR			4					19	1
37. SE Webster County			4		1	1		14	1
38. Boone County		1	26		2	3		60	11
39. Jamaica		1	7			1		30	2
40. Dallas County			29	3	5	6		44	5
41. Sac County			2					9	
42. Carroll County			3		1			5	
Subtotals	1	11	487	6	28	39	4	707	65
SOUTHERN THIRD									
43. Wapello County		1	67			1		11	
44. Red Rock Reservoir	18	1	87	1				52	1
45. Rathbun Reservoir		8	28		3	4		25	2
46. Lamoni			6	1	cw	2	1	50	8
47. Shenandoah		2	7	4	1	2		35	
Subtotals	18	12	195	6	4	9	1	173	11
TOTALS	179	186	2285	43	64	93	9	1769	175

Go Ea	Am Ke	Me	Pe Fa	Am Co	Ki	Wi Sn	Ri Bi Gu	He Gu	Ro Pi	Eu Co Do	Mo Do	Ea Sc Ow	Gr Ho Ow	Ba Ow	Lo Ea Ow
2	4								163	44	32	8	1	2	
3	1								60		8	6	8	1	
	6						30		87		27			2	
1	24						3	4	209		71	9	11	16	18
	13				2	1			80		114	8	8	7	
	9						5	8	147		130	3	5	5	
	21		1	2	2		1243	306	370		182	3	15	12	
	8						1		36		84	6	4	3	
	19			1			143	35	14	27	296	2	9	13	1
	14				1		9	1	286	9	359	4	4	12	
	30		2	3			1113	2	322	20	270	2		5	
	27			30	6	1	8210	219	917	21	148	4	1	5	
6	176	0	3	36	11	210757	575	2691	121	1721	55	66	83	19	
1	1	1		7					69	6	1		1	1	
	7	1							687	43	1	7	7	1	
	8	1							95	3	4	3	1	3	
	12					1			279	28	63		1	2	
1	28	1	0	7	0	1	0	0	130	80	69	10	10	6	0
1	2								110		21		4	1	
	4								284	7	66			1	
1	1								29		1		1		2
	2			21					450		12	1	4	1	
									21		9	2	4		
	1								5						
									183	17	2	1	2		
2	10	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	1082	24	111	4	15	3	2
	39								237		157	7	3	5	
	11								195		29	1	5	4	2
	27		1						847		325	4	5	6	
	19						7	6	171		102	2	10	5	4
	3								35		12	3	6	2	
	3								132	4	52	1	1	1	
	14								438		185	3	2	4	
	8								27		9				
	3								12		4		2		
	12	1							276	70	173	2	2	6	
	10					2			783	33	81	4	8	14	2
	4	1		4			10	3	387	7	49		3	4	3
	1								34	5	8			1	
									15		2		1		
	4								121	6	38	12	56	9	
	4								21	41	10	3	1		
	10								198	47	63		1	3	2
									38				4		
	2								5	4			1		
0	174	2	1	4	0	2	17	9	3972	217	1299	42	111	64	13
	6						111	22	256		10				
	6					1	145	25	23	5	55	4	1	3	
	16		1				571	50	24	1	25	10	2	4	2
	14								93	60	51	2	11	5	2
	9	1							67	32	21	2	2	1	
0	51	1	1	0	0	1	827	97	463	98	162	18	16	13	4
9	439	4	5	68	11	611601	681	9338	540	3362	129	218	169	38	

Table 2c. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2009–2010

Location	Sh Ea Ow	Be Ki	Re He Wo	Re Be Wo	Ye Be Sa	Do Wo	Ha Wo	No Fl	Pi Wo
MISSISSIPPI RIVER									
1. Yellow River Forest		4		63		62	25	7	11
2. SE Clayton County		4		39	2	60	23	2	4
3. Dubuque		1		50		78	19	5	2
4. Green Island		4	8	80		97	20	14	17
5. Clinton	2			54	1	77	19	10	3
6. Princeton		2	18	54		30	7	8	2
7. Davenport		4	5	86	3	136	17	12	4
8. Andalusia		1	6	51	2	54	13	6	4
9. Muscatine		2	4	62		91	34	8	3
10. West Mercer County		4	2	64	1	72	8	10	13
11. Burlington		3	37	37	3	51	4	16	1
12. Keokuk		5	24	92	2	110	18	22	11
Subtotals	2	34	104	732	14	918	207	120	75
MISSOURI RIVER									
13. Westfield		1		16		27	11	6	
14. Sioux City		2		43		79		7	
15. De Soto NWR				39		61	8	39	
16. Omaha			1	122		147	17	26	
Subtotals	0	3	1	220	0	314	36	78	0
NORTHERN THIRD									
17. Decorah		2		36		48	16	2	
18. Bremer County			1	24		24	9	2	
19. Worth County				3		19	4		
20. Mason City				27		60	22	1	
21. Spirit Lake				29		65	35	1	
22. Humboldt County				5		10			
23. Cherokee				17		22	5	13	
Subtotals	0	2	1	141	0	248	91	19	0
MIDDLE THIRD									
24. Lost Nation		2	24	67		64	14	10	5
25. North Linn		1	2	44	1	66	22	7	2
26. Cedar Rapids		8	1	69		123	26	9	1
27. Iowa City		2	3	67		133	27	6	1
28. Amana				11		16	3	1	1
29. Buchanan County		2	3	45		46	16	7	2
30. Cedar Falls-Waterloo		1		18		42	10		1
31. Marshalltown			1	20		57	18		
32. Grinnell			2	9		9	5	1	
33. Ames		cw		141	2	251	41	6	
34. Saylorville Reservoir	2	3		63		130	30	23	3
35. Des Moines		2		35		62	16	7	1
36. Neal Smith NWR	cw		1	16		24	5	1	
37. SE Webster County			3	11		7	5	3	
38. Boone County				145		178	84	3	6
39. Jamaica		2	6	20		34	7	11	
40. Dallas County		3	1	69		68	18	17	
41. Sac County			23		24	7	4		
42. Carroll County				18		25	12	1	
Subtotals	2	26	70	868	28	1342	363	113	23
SOUTHERN THIRD									
43. Wapello County			3	9		6	2	4	
44. Red Rock Reservoir		1	2	47		58	16	14	
45. Rathbun Reservoir	1	3	38	46	1	46	18	22	
46. Lamoni	2		11	73	cw	99	35	23	1
47. Shenandoah				34		51	8	13	
Subtotals	3	4	54	209	1	260	79	76	1
TOTALS	7	69	230	2170	43	3082	776	406	99

No Sh	Bl Ja	Am Cr	Ho La	Bl Ca Ch	Tu Ti	Re Br Nu	Wh Br Nu	Br Cr	Ca Wr	Wi Wr	Go Cr Ki	Ea Bl	He Th	Am Ro	Eu St
1	185	271	129	192	34	4	127	9	1	1	4		1	3	171
	111	528	221	236	65		137	15		2		1		1	132
	95	135	2	224	29		68	5	2	1	1	4		1	366
4	271	300	29	269	41	2	121	31	3	3	5	44		4	835
	166	89	71	303	25	1	125	13	3	1	2	11	2		913
	115	22	274	101	7		34	5	2			9			337
	165	86	58	409	42	2	152	26	7	8		5	1	18	2091
1	123	60	128	135	22	2	55	6	3	2		25	2	4	316
	143	95	668	181	45		84	10	12	1	1	13		2	943
	131	66	153	170	34	1	87	9	6		1	20	2	3	1748
	97	266	34	70	35	3	30	1	3	2	1	16		18	525
	376	1100	92	288	130	12	75	8	56		5	56		49	8265
6	1978	12918	1859	2578	509	27	1095	138	98	21	20	204	8	103	16642
4	51	13	377	17			6					4		1	300
8	95	81	42	250		cw	74	4				46	1	17	1848
cw	75	350	32	185	12	1	58	1		1		10		2	899
	98	79	125	262	55	2	184	17	6	4		45		28	2002
12	319	523	576	714	67	3	322	22	6	5	0	105	1	48	5049
	127	559	175	125	10	1	40	1						6	263
2	168	470	67	60		2	17	1						3	626
	44	59	11	19			7								3
1	127	4924	6	128		3	56	2						3	838
	37	58	31	179		9	73	3							356
	10	22	36	18			11	1							264
2	59	74	1292	33		2	18	1			1				175
5	572	6166	1618	562	10	17	222	9	0	0	1	0	0	12	2525
	244	162	58	105	20	19	111	5		1		1		7	2053
1	94	161	320	159	12	1	57	13		1		1		11	779
	120	524	12	360	39	5	88	20	5		1	1		6	1744
1	177	649	42	309	69	9	102	4	4	1		7		2	732
	24	10	16	40	4	1	13				1				170
1	112	170	155	149	8	5	65	4							432
1	72	8376	4	139	1	1	35	1						2	1743
	98	94	226	52			36		2						361
	37	255	9	15		2	6								30
1	211	9800	117	490	5	12	251	31	7	2	4			12	2287
2	131	271	67	309	20	4	104	7	3	2	1	3		27	3432
	64	359	10	64	19	2	44	6	7					18	167
	37	33	162	23		1	13							1	82
	29	10	110	25			9								1050
	154	550	314	318	72	12	175	7			1			2	794
	100	47	524	54	3	1	35	9					1	20	265
2	169	164	221	136	9	6	96	6	2			1		2	346
	26	6	33	32	1	7	21								184
	131	29	241	11		8	14	3							247
9	2030	21670	2641	2790	282	96	1275	116	30	7	9	14	1	110	16898
	61	142		50	6		10					3			234
1	186	143	99	143	1	12	60	1	2		1	7		1	626
	301	113	24	94	45	4	66	1	2			9		9	364
	370	299	1230	103	46	13	72	12	6	1	2	33		53	616
1	96	76	201	14	3		15	1	6		9	6		44	3397
2	1014	773	1554	404	101	29	223	15	16	1	12	58	0	107	5237
34	5913	42050	8248	7048	969	172	3137	300	150	34	42	381	10	380	46351

Table 2d. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2009–2010

Location	Ce Wa	Ye Ru Wa	Am Tr Sp	Sa Sp	Fo Sp	So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th Sp	Ha Sp
MISSISSIPPI RIVER									
1. Yellow River Forest	6		69		3	5	3	1	
2. SE Clayton County	5		69			22	4	2	
3. Dubuque	34		92		cw	13		1	
4. Green Island	55		406	1	2	8	5	5	
5. Clinton	90	3	179			18	3	2	
6. Princeton	65		71		2	4	9	1	
7. Davenport	10		138		2	28	4	49	
8. Andalusia	37		269		1	14		20	
9. Muscatine	20		287		2	11	4	9	
10. West Mercer County	54	2	1099		5	54	13	13	
11. Burlington	48		252		4	3	1	20	
12. Keokuk	522		402		3	49	10	44	
Subtotals	946	5	3333	1	24	229	56	167	0
MISSOURI RIVER									
13. Westfield	9		78		1	3			
14. Sioux City	327		517					1	
15. De Soto NWR	101		204		3	26		11	28
16. Omaha	143	2	266			27	1	4	15
Subtotals	580	2	1065	0	4	56	1	16	43
NORTHERN THIRD									
17. Decorah	1		206		3				
18. Bremer County	1		897		3	9	2		
19. Worth County			2			1			
20. Mason City	13		182			3		2	
21. Spirit Lake			149			1			
22. Humboldt County			8						
23. Cherokee	75		111		2	1			2
Subtotals	90	0	1555	0	8	15	2	2	2
MIDDLE THIRD									
24. Lost Nation	46		430			45	30	17	
25. North Linn	76		104			15	1	9	
26. Cedar Rapids	6		154		1	11		20	
27. Iowa City	81		200		1	16	1	19	
28. Amana	1		90		1	7	1		
29. Buchanan County	14		162		2	6			1
30. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	2		160		1	2			
31. Marshalltown			40		6				
32. Grinnell			22			1			
33. Ames	59		448		2	25	3	16	2
34. Saylorville Reservoir	502		648		3	101	45	32	3
35. Des Moines	27		96			12		9	3
36. Neal Smith NWR			100			3		2	1
37. SE Webster County			15			1			
38. Boone County			207			19		1	1
39. Jamaica	77		125			6		23	2
40. Dallas County	7		293	1		10		6	2
41. Sac County						2			7
42. Carroll County			8			1			2
Subtotals	898	0	3302	1	17	283	81	154	24
SOUTHERN THIRD									
43. Wapello County			21				1		
44. Red Rock Reservoir	39		351		1	31	4	15	
45. Rathbun Reservoir	203	5	402	1	3	5	1	8	
46. Lamoni	235	1	400		1	34		3	2
47. Shenandoah	134		161	7	3	51	18	35	47
Subtotals	611	6	1335	8	8	121	24	61	49
TOTALS	3125	13	10590	10	61	704	164	400	118

Wh Cr Sp	Da Ey Ju	La Lo	Sn Bu	No Ca	Re Wi Bl	me sp	Ru Bl	Co Gr	Br He Co	Pu Fi	Ho Fi	Pi Si	Am Go	Ho Sp	Eu Tr Sp
	938	4	1	188	2		1	6	1	10	53		74	266	
	410	151	21	188	7					2	26		62	331	
	312	1		189							86	1	94	344	
12	1160	2	1	244	2				4	3	22		102	773	
	355	2	15	168				3	277	38	23		52	333	
	440	9	38	153	62			2	1	2	15		46	303	7
4	580	16		405	1152			184	403	6	88	5	175	908	4
	695	14		212	21	1		2		17	42		73	376	56
1	487	299	102	412	10			1	1	4	57		113	720	252
	728	213	62	288	37		1	30	170	63	23		88	736	496
2	330			112	21		1	3	2	3	45	3	62	441	186
7	666	23		372	20	14	2	16	3	7	49		129	218	210
26	7101	734	240	2931	1334	15	5	247	862	155	529	9	1070	5749	1211
	424	22	10	22	25		1		3	4	3		63	322	
1	1264	256		143	218	6	1	7	37	4	39		71	664	
	681	cw		148	219	47	1		181		5		26	477	
22	1322	1		317	12	114	1	1	3	8	5	cw	151	663	
23	3691	279	10	630	474	167	4	8	224	16	52	0	311	2126	0
	697			151	5					12	45		150	245	
	961		85	94	4			2	2	8	15		42	458	
	98	50	63	3				4			86		38	120	
	829			92			2	2		9	133	21	102	856	
	122			40	104		27	8	16	16	80		24	784	
	26		2	8									7	42	
	486	411	3	25	32		15	7		2	63		108	372	
0	3219	461	153	413	145	0	44	23	18	47	422	21	471	2877	0
11	1020		1	216	2			2	1	51	69		50	1367	
	440	96	16	252	23			1	4	45	64	1	76	732	
	1427			505					1	1	57		111	929	
2	1050			496	2		1	2		2	43		89	795	7
1	125			35				2	45		12		38	180	15
	1183	13	15	146					15	10	38		36	400	
	788			283		7					127		52	525	
	402			185				3		2	26		63	286	
	289			41							8		31		
	1184	17		313	5	7		6	30	7	152	2	286	991	
	1097	100		447	36	2		1	6	1	36	2	547	499	
2	260	4	1	148	7						37		90	270	
	197	13	2	61		3		1	3	4	23		11	190	
	35		8	25					1	5	35		60	250	
	1208	14	3	329	13		1	4	12	11	32		279	1008	
	624	261	1	132	99	10	8	2	3	4	5		41	247	
2	1111	195	3	214	246	17		3	2	12	92		155	656	
	75			44	3			1				2	40	236	
	160	5	24	31	1	6	1			36	11	2	78	208	
181	2675	718	74	3903	437	52	11	28	123	191	867	11	2133	9769	22
	67			98						13	15		45	79	
	1798	540	2	246	208	1		3	2		73		135	421	
	399			187	12	11	3	3	3	33	96		148	478	
1	910	52	1	143	1		4		71	33	56	3	131	574	
7	1009			174	67	31	3	2	12		40		127	637	
8	4183	592	3	848	288	43	10	8	88	79	280	3	586	2189	0
75	30869	2784	480	8725	2678	277	74	314	1315	488	2150	44	4571	22710	1233

Table 3. Species reported on three or fewer Christmas Bird Counts, 2009–2010

Species	Counts
Gr. White-fronted Goose	Cedar Falls-Waterloo (1)
Snow Goose	Burlington (3), Omaha (2), Red Rock (1)
American Wigeon	Keokuk (13), Sioux City (1), Shenandoah (1)
Green-winged Teal	Burlington (5), Sioux City (3)
Greater Scaup	Davenport (5), Keokuk (487), Cedar Falls-Waterloo (2)
Surf Scoter	Princeton (2), Keokuk (6)
White-winged Scoter	Clinton (5)
Black Scoter	Keokuk (2)
Long-tailed Duck	Davenport (2), Keokuk (1)
duck sp.	DeSoto NWR (20)
Ruffed Grouse	Yellow River Forest (1)
D-c. Cormorant	Burlington (6), Keokuk (1)
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Muscatine (1)
Northern Goshawk	Muscatine (1)
accipiter sp.	Saylorville (1)
buteo sp.	Neal Smith NWR (1)
Sandhill Crane	Burlington (1)
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Keokuk (2)
Glaucous Gull	Rathbun (1)
gull sp.	Clinton (2)
Ringed Turtle-Dove	Lamoni (2)
Snowy Owl	DeSoto NWR (cw)
N. Saw-whet Owl	Clinton (1), Amana (1), Saylorville (2)
owl sp.	Omaha (1), Iowa City (1)
Loggerhead Shrike	Rathbun (1), Shenandoah (1)
shrike sp.	Omaha (1)
Black-billed Magpie	Westfield (3)
Gray Catbird	Burlington (1), Ames (1), Saylorville (1)
N. Mockingbird	Andalusia (3), Rathbun (1), Lamoni (1)
Brown Thrasher	Lamoni (1)
Spotted Towhee	DeSoto NWR (1)
Eastern Towhee	Andalusia (1), Dallas County (1), Rathbun (1)
Field Sparrow	Saylorville (1)
Vesper Sparrow	Lamoni (1)
Lincoln's Sparrow	Omaha (1), Buchanan County (1), Saylorville (3)
sparrow sp.	Muscatine (1)
Eastern Meadowlark	Jamaica (3)
Western Meadowlark	Jamaica (2), Rathbun (1), Lamoni (25)
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Spirit Lake (1)
Brewer's Blackbird	SE Webster County (2), Shenandoah (1)
White-winged Crossbill	Clinton (1)



Short-eared Owl, Woodbury, 1 February 2010. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA



Snowy Owl, Franklin, 27 February 2010. Photograph by Reid Allen, West Des Moines, IA



Snowy Owl, Franklin, 27 February 2010. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA



Swainson's Thrush, a first confirmed winter record for Iowa, Iowa City, Johnson, 7 December 2009. Photograph by Karole Fuller, Iowa City, IA



Snow Bunting, near Boone, Boone, 31 January 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA



Tufted Titmouse, Boone, 22 February 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA



American Kestrel, Woodbury, 22 February 2010. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA

Birding Eastern Lucas County

Aaron E. Brees

Most Iowa birders are familiar with the Whitebreast and Lucas units of Stephens State Forest. These units, found in western Lucas County, have long been known for their breeding warblers, Pileated Woodpeckers, and Ruffed Grouse, and more recently for Chuck-wills-widow and nesting Red-shouldered Hawks. Most birders, if they are even aware of their existence, have not visited the forest units in eastern Lucas County: the Chariton and Cedar Creek units. The birdlife of these units remains comparatively unknown, although in the past few years they have received limited coverage which reveals that they are worth further exploration. This article is not so much about where you can go to find specific species, but more a preliminary report of what has been found so far, and some suggestions for those who like to explore new areas.

The Chariton Unit is the easternmost unit in Lucas County, tucked between the Cedar Creek Unit to the west and the Thousand Acres Unit in Monroe County to the east (**Figures 1 and 2**). This unit, at around 1500 acres, is the second smallest unit of Stephens State Forest; however, due to its topography and lack of heavy use by people, it often feels wilder and more remote than the other units. To reach the Chariton Unit, take Highway 34 east from Chariton, then go north on 500th/340th Avenue for about 5.5 miles. At this point, a dirt road runs west to the forest boundary. It then forks, going north along the forest border or southwest into the forest. I recommend parking at this fork (**Figure 2.1**) and walking down the road into the forest. The forest road may or may not look drivable at this point, but it is definitely not passable once it reaches the valley floor due to flooding and erosion.

Walking down the forest road, you will parallel a deep wooded ravine as you drop into the main creek valley. This ravine is classic Iowa Acadian Flycatcher habitat. It is also a spot where it would not be surprising to find a Worm-eating Warbler. Eastern Towhees are common as you reach the valley floor and Blue-winged and Kentucky warblers are present in small numbers. Walking the road is an easy way to cover a large portion of the forest. This road continues all the way to the west end of the unit, so a person could spend several hours just walking out and back. Among the expected forest species, Scarlet Tanagers seem especially common here and are rarely out of earshot. For the more adventurous, a stream bisects the unit and is a good feature to follow off-trail, as well as a good place to look for Bobcat tracks. Louisiana Waterthrush is usually present somewhere along this stream, and the area's nesting Red-shouldered Hawks tend to stick close to the stream as well.

The Chariton Unit is a really good place to go if you just want to get away from the noise and distraction of other people. In my many trips to this unit, the only other visitors I have encountered were mushroom hunters. One brief note of caution: if it has rained recently, roads approaching the forest can be muddy and the road through the forest can flood. More importantly, stay out of the valley when rain seems likely. In the summer of 2008, there was a flash flood that covered the entire valley floor with rushing water, as

evidenced by huge areas of flattened vegetation, and debris deposited several feet off the ground in trees and bushes.

The Cedar Creek Unit is a larger and more diverse property than the Chariton Unit. Although generally easily accessed, getting to the unit from Highway 34 involves a number of jogs and road name changes, so it is better to consult your Sportsmen's Atlas than depend on my directions. However, a useful reference point is the intersection of County Road H32 and 300th Trail. Driving north along 300th takes you into the middle of the forest where most of the access points are located. Before reaching the forest, this road has good habitat for Bobolink, meadowlarks, Grasshopper and Henslow's sparrows, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Bobwhite, and the occasional Northern Mockingbird.

While there are large chunks of the unit that probably never see a birder, a couple spots that have been birded suggest that the rest is well worth exploring. The first of these is reached by taking 510th Street east from 300th Trail. As the road drops down to a stream crossing, there is a new parking lot on the south side of the road (**Figure 2.2**). On the north side of the road, walk the service road that runs up a hill to the north and west. This area

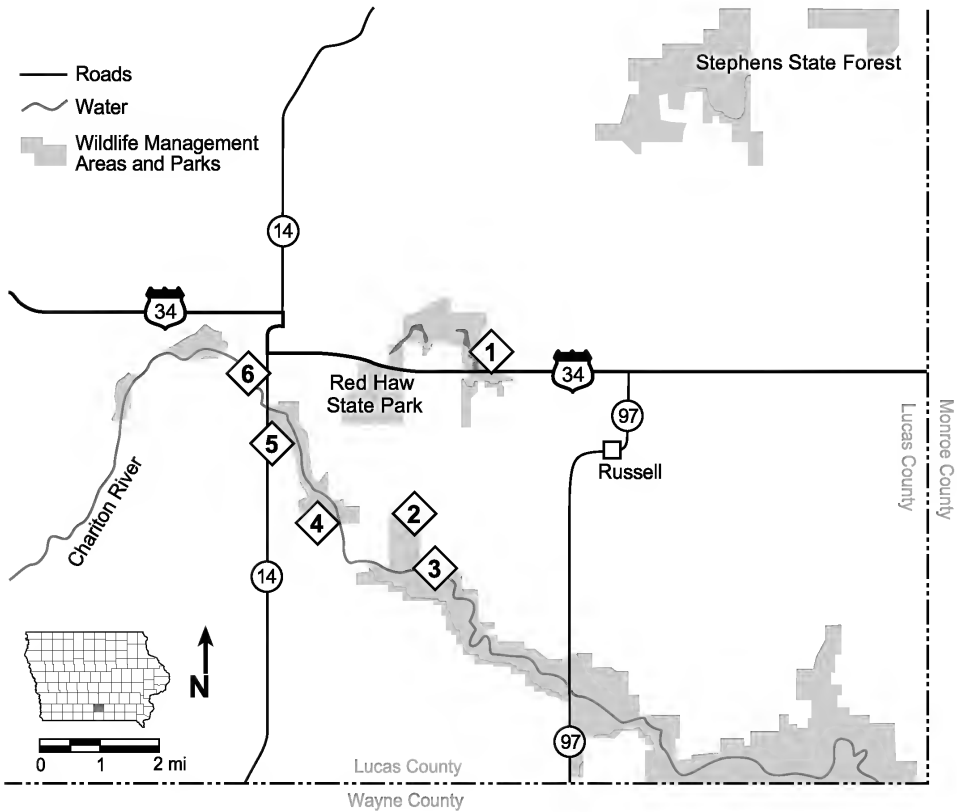


Figure 1. Map of eastern Lucas County showing the location of Stephens State Forest and other sites mentioned at the end of the article.

is a mix of forest, old field, cedar groves, and cropland. As you reach the top of the hill, the old road will pass a big cedar grove then arrive in a wide open grassy area, which serves as a good orientation point. From this opening, an old road/path runs off to the north along an old fence line. Following this path will take you through an area that has had Acadian Flycatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat territories. Birds of scrubby habitats like Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, and Eastern Towhee, are common. This section of the trail can be spectacular for butterflies as well. Returning to the open hilltop, if you continue due west you will begin to drop down into a stream valley. This interesting valley is wooded on the sides but fairly open along the stream. This is confirmed breeding location for Blue-winged Warbler, and Pileated Woodpeckers are seen occasionally.

A second spot to visit for a good hike is reached from the north parking lot on the west side of 300th Trail (**Figure 2.3**). Jim Sinclair and I explored this area once in May and found nice flocks of migrants plus several interesting breeding birds. At the parking area, a male Summer Tanager was singing from the oaks. Following the trail into the forest, you are immediately in mature woods, which is excellent for warblers and forest breeders. The trail eventually forks and slopes downhill into a stream valley. We took the right fork down to the stream, and then walked the stream bed south for some distance before finding and following the other fork back to the parking lot. Along the stream, we were repeatedly scolded by an angry pair of Red-shouldered Hawks. The recent appearance of these birds in

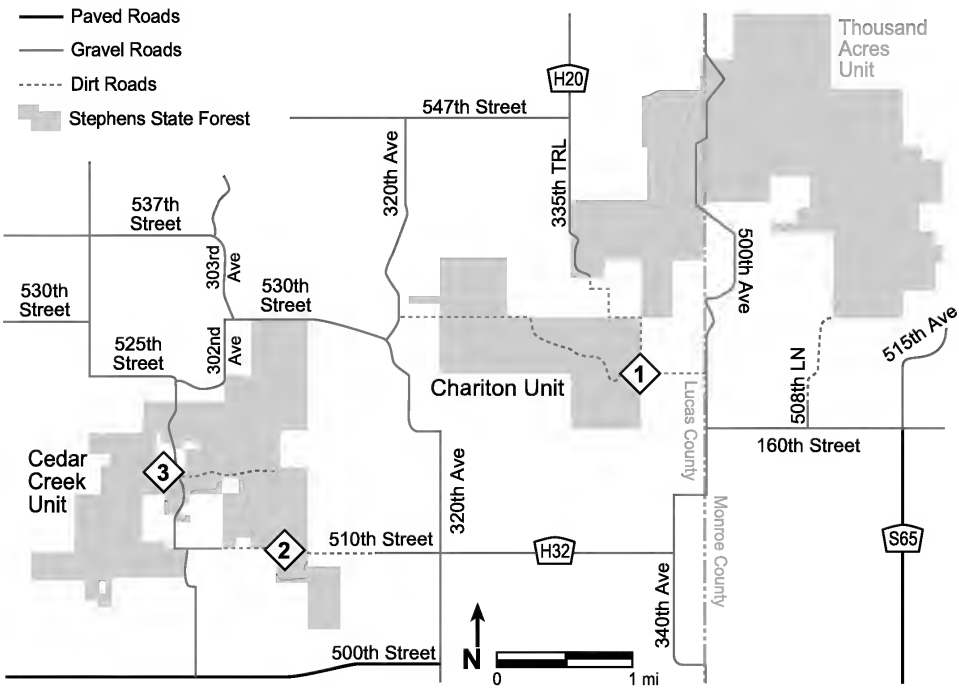


Figure 2. Map of the Cedar Creek and Chariton Units of Stephens State Forest showing the three sites mentioned in the article.

southcentral Iowa is an exciting development. After being occasionally reported as singles off and on for years, Red-shouldered Hawks now appear to be nesting in every unit of Stephens State Forest as well as the Rathbun Wildlife Area. In addition to the hawks, Northern Parula and Louisiana Waterthrush were singing along the stream, and waves of migrants continued to pass by. The hilly, wooded slopes of the area seem perfect for Acadian Flycatcher and Kentucky Warbler, and with regular coverage would undoubtedly produce the occasional Hooded or Worm-eating warbler. These two spots cover only a small part of the Cedar Creek Unit. There are a number of other access points to explore the forest that may be even better than those described above.

While visiting the Chariton and Cedar Creek units, there are other nearby spots that may be worth a visit. The following loop will quickly cover multiple habitats, each with its own interesting birds in season. Taking Highway 34 back toward Chariton, the shallow south end of Lake Morris (**Figure 1.1**) comes right up to the road. There are often migrating ducks, herons, and shorebirds here and on the private restored wetland on the south side of the highway. To the south along 255th Avenue, Slab Castle Wildlife Area (**Figure 1.2**) is a great spot for nesting Henslow's Sparrow and interesting prairie wildlife in general. South of Slab Castle, where the road crosses the Chariton River (**Figure 1.3**), there is a nice wetland and floodplain forest habitat. This is another spot where Red-shouldered Hawks have nested. Returning north on 255th, take 450th Street west. This will take you past Engebretsen Wildlife Area (**Figure 1.4**). This is another excellent area for Henslow's Sparrow and the extensive restored wetlands are often loaded with waterfowl and wading birds during migration. Continuing west on 450th will take you to Highway 14. Take Highway 14 north to Pin Oak Marsh (**Figure 1.5**). The large pools on either side of the road have been productive for migrating puddle ducks, wading birds, and shorebirds depending on water levels. Just north of the Chariton River bridge, on the west side of the highway, there is a small parking area (**Figure 1.6**). Walking the trail west into the forest will take you to an area that has produced Prothonotary Warbler and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in summer.

All of the locations discussed above are situated between the Lucas and Whitebreast Units of Stephens State Forest to the west, and Colyn Wildlife Area and Rathbun Lake to the southeast. The next time you are planning to visit those popular birding locations, allow some extra time to explore the underbirded areas of eastern Lucas County.

6759 NW 6th Drive, Des Moines, IA 50313 (abrees@hotmail.com)

Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life*

James J. Dinsmore

The June 1960 issue of *Iowa Bird Life* was fairly thin with only 20 pages. The lead article by Woodward Brown discussed the historic and recent status of Upland Sandpipers in Iowa. Accounts in the literature indicated that Upland Sandpipers had been moderately common in suitable habitat across most of Iowa, but in recent years their numbers seemed to have declined as grasslands and pastures disappeared.

A short article by J. Harold Ennis described a brief mid-April visit he and two others made to Hayden Prairie in Howard County. A late spring snowstorm hindered their birding, but the three saw several Short-eared Owls and 42 Tundra Swans. Probably the most interesting short note was one describing a Brown Pelican found in 1959 near Des Moines by Dr. and Mrs. Harold Peasley, Iowa's first record in almost 60 years.

Much of the issue described the spring IOU meeting at Waterloo. A total of 143 people registered for the meeting, and 159 species were found on the Sunday field trips. Business discussed at the meeting included raising the dues from two to three dollars. The article was illustrated with numerous photographs by Fred Kent. Among the faces in the crowd, I noted longtime editor Fred Pierce, Beth Proescholdt, and two of my former Iowa State professors, Milt Weller and Paul Errington. Peter Petersen was elected president of the organization.

646 Mallory Hill Dr, The Villages, FL 32162 (oldcoot@iastate.edu)

Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Spring Business Meeting

1 May 2010

The IOU spring business meeting was held at the Ramada Inn, Bettendorf, Iowa. President Stephen J. Dinsmore called the meeting to order at 2:30 P.M. Also in attendance were Aaron Brees, vice president; Cathy Konrad, secretary; board members Bill Scheible, Tom Schilke, John Bissell (out-going member), Jay Gilliam (new member); and members of the organization.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Secretary's Report: Cathy Konrad reported that minutes from the fall 2009 business meeting were published in *IBL* 79(4):236–237.

Treasurer's Report: Steve Dinsmore reported for Treasurer Doug Hunt that total current assets are \$11,500 in checking and \$51,000 in a CD and money market.

Membership Coordinator's Report: Steve Dinsmore reported for Pam Allen that there are currently 389 paid members. There were 439 members at the end of 2009 and this does not represent an alarming drop.

Records and Publications: Ann Johnson reported that John and Anna Bissell have volunteered to serve as editors for the *IOU News*. John's interest and knowledge of the IOU and Anna's expertise in graphic design will provide an excellent combined effort. The organization thanked Paul Hertzell and Bill Scheible for their past effort in putting out an excellent newsletter. Ann reported board approval to open the on-line newsletter to the general public. Ann reported that Aaron Brees will go on

the Records Committee for a 6-year term to replace Matt Kenne. Records for 2009 are complete. Two new species have been added to the Iowa List: Violet-green Swallow and Fulvous Whistling-Duck. The Iowa list is now at 422.

Library/Historical: Hank Zaletel continues to post articles on the IA-Bird listserv. Hank reported that Mary Lou Petersen has several back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* from Ann Barker's library. Steve Dinsmore offered to house these and use them for educational purposes. Hank reported that an artist and birder who worked with Fred Kent owns a collection of 35mm bird slides and is giving them to the IOU. Hank Zaletel will research this further as to whether the slides should be placed in university archives or private ownership. Hank has set up an IOU Flickr site specifically for IOU people and meetings. Ann Johnson will have administrative control of postings. The 1926 meeting in Atlantic, Iowa and the 1946 meeting at Palisades-Kepler State Park were shown to the organization. This site is not for bird photographs. Hank plans to write an article for the newsletter with further information about the Flickr site, how members can gain access, and the types of photographs

to be submitted. A brief demonstration of the Flickr web 2.0 utility was given.

Travel/Trip: Steve Dinsmore asked the membership for volunteers to both chair and serve on this committee. Trips have always been an endeavor enjoyed by members; recent resignations have left this committee inactive.

Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas: Billy Reiter-Marolf, BBA Coordinator, presented membership with an update of this 5-year project. This is a joint project between IOU and the Iowa DNR. Twenty-four blocks are complete. Members are invited to participate in blockbusting weekends. For blockbusting weekends, an orientation is given Friday night with Saturday and Sunday birding. The 2010 dates are as follows: May 21–23 in the Burlington/Muscatine area, June 5 at Brushy Creek State Recreation Area, June 18–20 in the Clinton/Dubuque area, and July 9–11 at Lake Red Rock. Steve Dinsmore announced prizes for the most BBA volunteer effort in 2009. The prize for most hours of effort was a photograph donated by Jay Gilliam and went to Tom Schilke. The prize for most confirmed breeding birds was a Sibley field guide donated by Doug Harr and went to Jerry Von Ehwegen. The winner of the drawing with the number of chances related to hours of effort was Stuart Sparkman and he won a new BBA t-shirt.

NEW BUSINESS

Donation to Iowa Water and Land Coalition: Steve Dinsmore reported that the \$5,000 donation approved by the board

was paid in April. This donation makes IOU a member of the coalition of 46 conservation and outdoor recreation groups who sponsor the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund.

Nominating Committee: The IOU Nominating Committee members John Rutenbeck, Mark Proesholdt, and Sharon Stilwell presented the slate of officers. This slate was published in *IOU News* 26(1), 2010. The slate: secretary: Cathy Konrad (for a 2nd 2-year term); treasurer: Doug Hunt (for a 2nd 2-year term); board of directors: Jay Gilliam (to replace John Bissell), Tom Schilke (to serve a 2nd 2-year term), and Ken Lowder (to serve a 2nd 2-year term). No new nominations were received from the floor. All nominees approved by membership vote.

Fall Meeting: The location and dates for this meeting have not been finalized.

Other: Doug Harr, the Iowa Coordinator for the Breeding Bird Survey, sought membership participation in this important survey. Five routes are still unoccupied. A 3-year commitment for a route is required for the data to be utilized.

IOU Members: The organization recognized Steve Freed as a member first attending an IOU meeting.

Hank Zaletel moved and Bob Nickolson seconded that meeting be adjourned at 3:30 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Konrad, secretary

Iowa Ornithologists' Union Board Meeting

1 May 2010

The IOU spring board meeting was held at the Ramada Inn, Bettendorf, Iowa. President Stephen J. Dinsmore called the meeting to order at 12:20 P.M. Also in attendance were Aaron Brees, vice-president; Cathy Konrad, secretary; board members Bill Scheible, Tom Schilke, John Bissell (out-going member), Jay Gilliam (new member); Ann Johnson, Hank Zaletel, and Karen Disbrow, committee chairs; Pam Allen, membership coordinator.

Secretary's Report: Cathy Konrad reported that the minutes of the 2009 fall board meeting were published in *IBL* 79(4):234–236. The December budget meeting minutes were published in *IBL* 80 (1):43–44.

Treasurer's Report: Steve Dinsmore presented the written report provided by Treasurer Doug Hunt. Financials through 22 April 2010 are on target with no unusual or unbudgeted expenses noted. Budgeted disbursements of \$3,000 to conservation projects and \$5,000 to the Iowa Water and Land coalition have been made. The report showed \$11,500 in checking and approximately \$51,000 in a CD and money market. Treasurer Hunt has completed the IOU tax return that needs to be signed by President Dinsmore and mailed by 15 May 2010.

Membership Coordinator's Report: Pam Allen reported there are 389 paid members. Seventy-two members have not renewed for 2010. Many of these could reflect inadvertent payment lapse. Nineteen are non-renewals from 2009 and twelve from 2008. Twenty-one new members have joined this year. Pam's analysis of membership trends revealed that often members join for only a year or two. Discussion related to these trends: this could reflect stu-

dents who join while in school, economic factors, or individuals who do not find the organization fits their needs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Publications: Ann Johnson requested that the board approve John and Anna Bissell as newsletter editors. Bill Scheible moved and Tom Schilke seconded this motion. Motion carried. Ann Johnson requested the board approve placing the *IOU News* online for the general public to access. Currently, there is a time delay before nonmembers can access the online newsletter. Discussion related to the value of the newsletter as a membership recruitment tool. Cathy Konrad moved and Bill Scheible seconded the motion. Motion carried. Pam Allen suggested members could be given the choice of paper or electronic version. No decision made at this time.

Membership: Karen Disbrow discussed several events she has attended on behalf of IOU such as Pella Bald Eagle Days and Earth Day events. Bill Scheible moved and Jon Bissell seconded that Doug Harr be added to membership committee. Motion carried. Discussion held regarding how new members learn about IOU. Ann Johnson will be adding this question to the application form in the future.

Projects: no report

Records: Ann Johnson reported that all 2009 records are complete. Aaron Brees will replace Matt Keene who went off the committee in January.

Library/Historical: Hank Zaletel reported that Mary Lou Petersen has several back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* from Ann Barker's library. Steve Dinsmore offered to house these and use them for educational purposes. Hank Zaletel reported that an artist and birder who worked with Fred Kent owns a collection of 35mm bird slides and is giving them to the IOU. Hank Zaletel will research this further as to whether the slides should be placed in university archives or private ownership. Hank Zaletel has set up an IOU Flickr site specifically for IOU people and meetings. The 1926 meeting in Atlantic, Iowa and the 1946 meeting in Palisades were shown to the board. This site is not for bird photographs. Hank plans to write an article for the newsletter with further information about the Flickr site, how members can access, and the types of photographs to submit.

Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas: Steve Dinsmore reported that Billy Reiter-Marolf will provide update at the general business meeting. This is the third season and the project is ahead of schedule. Money from a U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant will pay Katy Patterson to assist with this project. Three blockbusting weekends are coming up at Muscatine, Clinton, Dubuque, Brushy Creek, and Red Rock.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Nominating Committee: Slate completed and was published in the *IOU News* 26(1), 2010.

Trips: Mike Johnston resigned as chair. There is now a need for both chair and members for this committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Donation to Iowa Water and Land Coalition (IWILL) Campaign: The \$5,000 donation to this effort was paid in April.

NEW BUSINESS

Advertisement in the IOU News: Steve Dinsmore was approached by the Omaha Marriott regarding a birding package advertisement in the newsletter. Hank Zaletel reported from a historical perspective that this has been done in the past and prices were set for certain length of advertisements. The money could help defray the cost of the newsletter. The board asked newly appointed newsletter editors, John and Anna Bissell, to investigate costs and procedures involved with advertisement

Participation in Des Moines Youth Expo: Steve Dinsmore was approached regarding interest in IOU participation in this September 25-26 event. No action taken.

Cathy Konrad moved and Bill Scheible seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Konrad, secretary

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional \$45, Foreign \$35, Goldfinch \$30, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Join, give a gift, or manage your membership on-line at <www.iowabirds.org>. Paper forms for new members and renewals may be mailed to the treasurer (see inside front cover). Back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* are available from Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS: Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word to editor. Research manuscripts should include abstract, introduction, study area, methods, results, discussion, and literature cited sections and will be sent for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published promptly depending on space available.

Photos and graphics: Submit only original, unsized, and unenhanced photos in your camera's JPEG (*.jpg) format. Photos must be 300 dpi at the size they will be printed (6-1/2" wide by 6-1/2" high for the cover and various smaller sizes inside), so setting your camera to its highest possible resolution is recommended. The editor will do any resizing and enhancing required because any previous adjustments to the photos may make them unusable. Submit photos and graphics as e-mail attachments.

E-mail all material other than seasonal reports to editor at cootjr@iastate.edu. Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue** (Vol. xx[1]), **April 1 for spring issue** [2], **July 1 for summer issue** [3], **October 1 for fall issue** [4]. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

IOU News Co-editors: John and Anna Bissell, 328 SE Cedarwood Drive, Grimes, IA 50111-1143 (John. annabissell@gmail.com)

IOU WEB SITE: <www.iowabirds.org>, Ann Johnson, Webmaster

IOWA RBA: John Bissell (jabissell@mchsi.com)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Christopher J. Caster, 4 South Ridge Ct., Coralville, IA 52241 (cjcaster@earthlink.net).

BIRD SIGHTINGS: Subscribe at <www.iowabirds.org>

ADDRESS CHANGES: Update your on-line profile at <www.iowabirds.org> or send address and e-mail changes to Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION: Fall 2010: 22–24 October 2010, Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge.

FRONT COVER PHOTO: Snow Bunting, northeastern Boone, 23 February 2010. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

BACK COVER PHOTO: Gray Partridge, Boone airport, Boone, 14 January 2010. Photograph by Jim Moreland, Boone, IA.

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CONTENTS

Meet an Iowa Birder—Jim Sinclair <i>by Rick Trieff</i>	45
Field Reports—Winter 2009–2010 <i>by Aaron E. Brees</i>	47
Iowa Christmas Bird Count, 2009–2010 <i>by Chris Caster</i>	63
IOU 2010 Photography Contest Winners	68
Birding Eastern Lucas County <i>by Aaron E. Brees</i>	83
Fifty Years Ago in <i>Iowa Bird Life</i> <i>by James J. Dinsmore</i>	87
IOU Spring Business Meeting <i>by Cathy Konrad</i>	88
IOU Board Meeting <i>by Cathy Konrad</i>	90